

Health Matters



from the Kane County Health Department

— June 23, 2016 —

Trending Matters:

Help prevent breeding mosquitoes that carry West Nile & Zika

- ✓ Don't let standing water collect on your property!
- ✓ Check for turned up garbage can lids, grill covers, and children's toys.
- ✓ Empty, clean & refill birdbaths & wading pools frequently.



The Culex mosquito

The Aedes mosquito

Warm weather means West Nile season

Predicting West Nile virus activity is a lot like predicting the weather, as it can change week to week. The key factors in determining high or low levels of West Nile virus activity are temperature and rainfall.

Although people usually notice mosquitoes during rainy conditions, those mosquitoes are commonly called floodwater or nuisance mosquitoes and typically do not carry West Nile virus.

In hot, dry weather, mosquitoes that do carry West Nile virus breed in stagnant water, like street catch basins and ditches, and multiply rapidly. Remember, it's always a good idea to regularly inspect your home and yard for sources of standing water where these mosquitoes are likely to breed.

This year the Health Department is also actively monitoring for the Zika virus. We need to keep in mind that in Kane County, the public at large is currently at extremely low risk of local transmission of the Zika Virus.

The primary type of mosquito that has been found to transmit Zika virus (*Aedes aegypti*) is rarely found in Illinois. However, we will continue to provide up to date information as we receive it.

Check our website for more Zika information by clicking [HERE](#). Those persons planning to travel to areas where the Zika virus is found should take the standard precautions for preventing mosquito bites. Also, it has been shown that the virus can be spread during sex by a man infected with Zika to his partner.

**(right)
carrier of
the West
Nile Virus**

Commonly found
in the Midwestern
USA



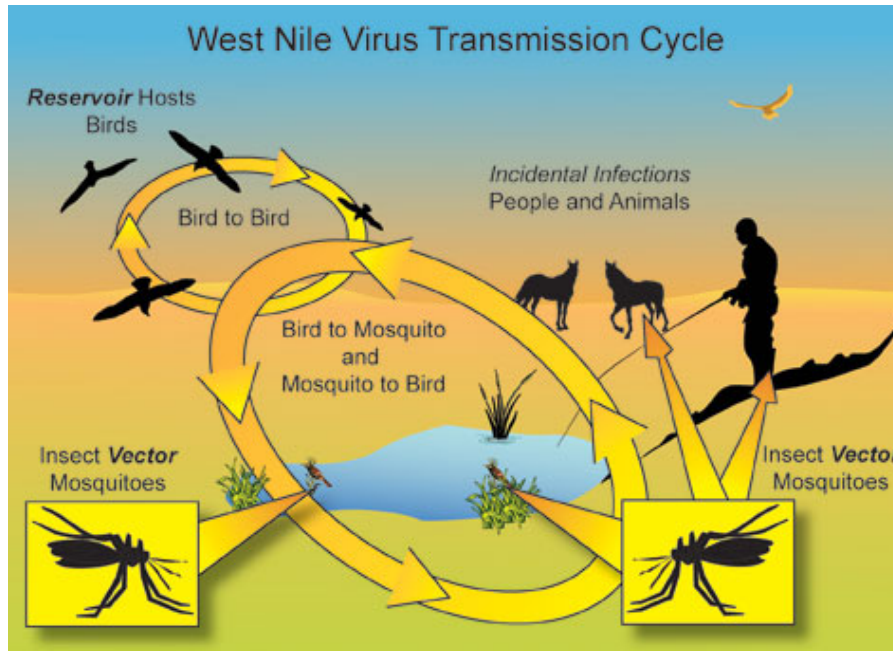
**(right)
carrier of
the Zika
Virus**

Currently **NOT**
commonly found
in the Midwestern
USA



Annual monitoring for West Nile Virus

The Health Department conducts several activities to monitor West Nile virus. KCHD staff maintains mosquito traps throughout the county as a way to monitor this activity. The mosquitoes are trapped and then taken back to the Health Department where a test can tell whether West Nile virus is present. You can view trap locations, find up-to-date West Nile monitoring data, historical information and more when you visit the West Nile page by clicking [HERE](#).



Protect against foodborne illness

With backyard barbecues and family get-togethers in full swing, this is the season for plenty of good eating. The trouble is, summer foodborne illness is a preventable public health challenge that causes an estimated 48 million illnesses and 3,000 deaths each year in the United States. You can follow simple rules to ensure your next party is free from foodborne illness.

According to the FDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), foodborne illnesses increase during the summer. As a way to raise awareness of the problem, the Kane County Health Department will be reminding residents about the importance of proper food handling. To help spread the word and to educate friends and family, please check our website often and also follow us on [Facebook](#) and Twitter [@KaneCoHealth](#) for tips and guidelines.

1 in 6
About 1 in 6 (or 48 million) people gets sick each year from contaminated food.

50%
E. coli O157 infections have been cut about in half since 1997.

\$365 Million
Salmonella infection accounts for \$365 million in direct medical costs each year.

Source: CDC

Salmonella infections alone carry a cost of \$365 million



per year in direct medical costs. The onset of symptoms may occur within minutes to sometimes weeks, and often present themselves as flu-like symptoms, as the ill person may experience symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever. Because the symptoms are often flu-like, many people may not recognize that the illness is caused by harmful bacteria or other pathogens in food, and it is often erroneously referred to as "stomach flu."

So why are there more cases in the summer?

The answer appears to be twofold. First, there are the natural causes. Bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, water, and in the bodies of people and animals. These microorganisms grow faster in the warm summer months.

Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110°F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid. Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Secondly, outside activities increase. More people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues, and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides — thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration, and washing facilities — are usually not available.

Consumers can fight foodborne illness by following these four simple steps to safer food in the summertime:



- **Clean: Wash Hands and Surfaces Often**

Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- **Separate: Don't Cross-Contaminate**

Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of foodborne illness.

- **Cook: Cook to Safe Temperatures**

Food safety experts agree that food is safely cooked when it is heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness.

- **Chill: Refrigerate Promptly**

Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep cold food cold!

Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat. Above 90 °F, food should not be left out over 1 hour. Play it safe; put leftover perishables back on ice once you finish eating so they do not spoil or become unsafe to eat. If you have any doubts, throw it out.

More information about safe food handling, including the proper cooking temperatures, is available from the Health Department's website [HERE](#), from the FSIS [HERE](#) and the CDC [HERE](#).

Sizzling summer weather brings its own kind of dangers



It's midway through June and we've already had a taste of hot, humid weather. Is this what we can expect for the rest of the summer of 2016?

No one knows for sure right now, but what we do know is that we can prepare ourselves for the type of heat that we know can come our way. According to the National Weather Service (NWS), heat is one of the leading weather-related killers in the United States, resulting in hundreds of fatalities each year.

Historically, heat waves have had a devastating effect on people. In 1995 more than 700 deaths in the Chicago area were attributed to heat, making it the deadliest weather event in Chicago history. We also know that in August 2003, a record heat wave in Europe claimed an estimated 50,000 lives. And in 2015, as many as 2,500 people died during a heat wave in India. We are seeing blistering temperatures this month in the American Southwest.

The Kane County Office of Emergency Management and Kane County Health Department monitor potential extreme heat conditions in the County and will take action based on extreme heat alerts issued by NWS.

Heat alerts, described to the right, will be posted on our [Web site home page](#) under the NEWS heading in the right hand column.

In addition, **air quality alerts** are often issued during high heat days.

For up-to-date advisories on air pollution action days, please check our [Web site home page](#) where alert days are also posted under the NEWS heading in the right hand column.

Our air quality alert looks like this:

Fri. & Sat June 10-11



for Sensitive Groups
[INFO](#)

Learn more about Kane County's air quality program [HERE](#).

Four terms to remember:

Excessive Heat Outlook:



Using a combination of temperature and humidity over a certain number of days the Excessive Heat Outlook is designed to provide an indication of areas where people and animals may need to take precautions against the heat during the months of May to November.

Excessive Heat Outlook:



Issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 12 to 48 hours. A Watch is used when the risk of a heat wave has increased but its occurrence and timing is still uncertain. A Watch provides enough lead time so that those who need to prepare can do so.

Heat Advisory:



Issued within 12 hours of the onset of a heat index of at least 105 degrees F, but less than 115 degrees F, for less than three hours per day, or nighttime lows above 80 degrees for two consecutive days.

Excessive Heat Warning:



Issued within 12 hours of the onset of a heat index of at least 105 degrees for more than three hours per day for two consecutive days, or heat index more than 115 degrees F for any period of time.

Learn more about Kane County's heat program by clicking [HERE](#).



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**Kane County,
Illinois**

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