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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SNHD reports Clark County's first human West Nile Virus case for 2006

LAS VEGAS - August 18, 2006 - The Southern Nevada Health District today reported Clark County's first human West Nile Virus case for 2006. The individual, who is under age 50, contracted the illness while traveling in Northern Nevada and has the more severe form of the illness.

West Nile virus is spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes, which acquire the virus by feeding on infected birds. The illness is not spread person to person.

Since spring, there have been no mosquitoes that have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Clark County. In addition, there have been no reported cases of people contracting the illness in the county this year.

Although the individual contracted the illness while traveling in another part of the state, disease reporting protocols list the case in the county of residence.

"As the summer continues and people enjoy outdoor activities, it is important to practice preventive measures to avoid mosquito bites," said Dr. Donald Kwalick, chief health officer.

"Mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus remain active throughout Clark County and in neighboring counties and states," said Kwalick.

The health district strongly stresses the need for individual protective actions to avoid mosquito bites:

Apply an insect repellent containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) according to manufacturer's directions. *Repellents containing picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus also have some efficacy. However, DEET is the best-studied and most-effective repellent available.*

- Wear pants and long-sleeved shirts, when outdoors.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, notably at dusk (the first two hours after sunset) and dawn.

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SNHD reports first WNV case in Clark County - add one

- Eliminate areas of standing water, including bird baths, un-maintained swimming pools and sprinkler runoff, which support mosquito breeding.

Future updates on human West Nile virus cases will be posted to the health district website at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org.

For additional information on West Nile virus, including updated maps of West Nile virus positive mosquitoes, birds and horses, visit the Southern Nevada Health District website at www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org. The public may also call the West Nile virus hotline at (702) 759-1220 with questions, concerns or to report standing water and large numbers of mosquitoes.

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