



# City of Grand Forks

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## NEWS RELEASE

### West Nile Virus Identified In Grand Forks

DATE: July 9, 2014

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grand Forks- A pool of mosquitoes collected yesterday from Grand Forks has been identified as having West Nile virus. The cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks urge citizens to take extra precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes.

The mosquito most common for transmitting West Nile virus is the *Culex tarsalis*. This mosquito is most active just before sundown and throughout the night into the early morning hours. To help reduce your risk of getting West Nile virus, the Health Department recommends the following protective measures:

- Use insect repellent that contains DEET.
- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when possible.
- Eliminate standing water around homes (e.g., buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).

Grand Forks Mosquito Control operates as if the virus is always present and therefore will not be making major changes to the daily operations of mosquito control.

West Nile virus is generally transmitted by mosquitoes. When a mosquito feeds on an infected bird, it can pick up the virus and transmit it to other noninfected birds. Occasionally, infective mosquitoes will feed on mammals such as horses, dogs, cats, and humans, and transmit the virus to them. Most people infected with the West Nile virus do not develop symptoms. Sometimes, though, mild illness results 1 to 2 weeks after exposure with symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, skin rash, and swollen lymph nodes. Less than one percent of infected people may develop a serious illness that includes encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). These persons might experience headache, high fever, neck stiffness, disorientation, convulsions, and muscle weakness. Infection may prove fatal, especially among the elderly, in a small number of those who develop encephalitis. West Nile virus is not transmitted directly from birds to humans.

For more information about West Nile virus and the Grand Forks Mosquito Control Program visit our web site at: [www.gfmosquito.com](http://www.gfmosquito.com)

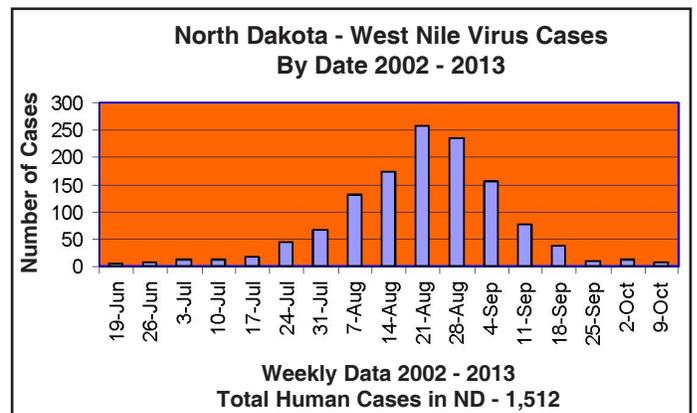
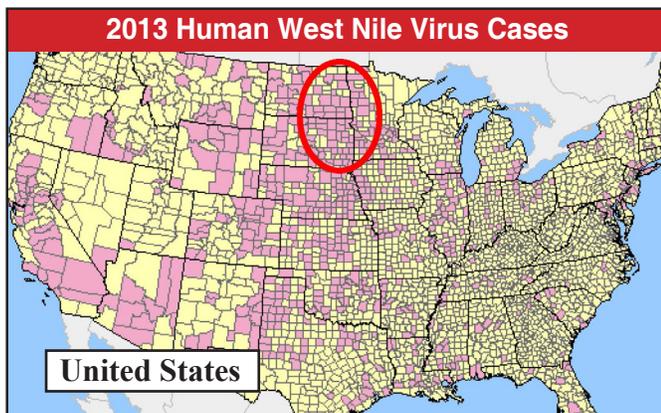
**FIGHT  
THE BITE!**

# GRAND FORKS MOSQUITO CONTROL



## WEST NILE VIRUS RISK FACTORS

**West Nile virus (WNV)** is an infection transmitted by mosquitoes. The mosquito most common for transmitting this virus is one that is widespread throughout the Grand Forks region. This mosquito does not discriminate. People of all ages are susceptible to WNV infection, but the elderly are at higher risk for developing the more severe form of this disease (neuroinvasive illness). Children infected with WNV generally show no symptoms or may have a mild fever.



### Risk factors for West Nile virus:

- Time of year – The majority of WNV cases occur from July – September.
- Geographic region – The Dakotas have reported some of the highest cases per capita in the United States.
- Time spent outdoors not wearing protective clothing and mosquito repellent – If you work or spend a lot of time outdoors (golfing, gardening, hunting, etc.), you're at a higher risk of being bitten by mosquitoes.
- Proximity – If you live in an area where WNV has already been identified or near mosquito larval habitat.
- If you have a weakened immune system.

### The best way to prevent West Nile virus infection is to avoid mosquito bites.

- Use mosquito-repellant products containing DEET.
- Wear long sleeves and pants.
- Eliminate any standing water from your property, such as trash bins, plant saucers, rain gutters, buckets, etc.

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