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District Plans to Spray for Mosquito Control

The Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District is planning to spray to control mosquitoes within its 77-square-mile jurisdiction, including Oak Park. The spraying is in response to confirmed cases of West Nile virus in dead birds and mosquitoes, two human cases in Illinois and climate conditions favorable to mosquito breeding.

Spraying in Oak Park is scheduled from 9 p.m. to midnight for one evening between Thursday and Monday, depending on weather conditions. Residents can call the District at 708.447.1765 to be notified of the exact day of spraying. The District will evaluate the effect of the spraying before determining if additional applications are necessary.

The Illinois Department of Public Health, Oak Park Department of Public Health and the Oak Park Board of Public Health concur with the District's decision to spray. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) recognize a legitimate and compelling need for the prudent use of spraying to control adult mosquitoes.

Insecticides to be used have been approved by the USEPA and should not pose any undue risk to humans or animals, breaking down in sunlight within 24 hours and producing little residual effect. However, persons with asthma or other respiratory ailments may wish to stay inside during spraying, with their air conditioners set to recirculate and the exhaust closed.

Risk of contracting West Nile Virus, which is not spread by person-to-person contact, is extremely low and most people bitten by an infected mosquito do not become seriously ill. However, older adults, children and people with weakened immune systems due to illness and medications are more susceptible to infection. To prevent mosquito bites, health officials urge individuals to wear shoes and socks, long pants, long-sleeved shirts and mosquito repellent when outdoors at dawn, dusk and early evening when mosquitoes are most active.

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Mosquito Spraying
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More information is available by calling the Oak Park Department of Public Health at 708.358.5480. A West Nile Virus Prevention video also is airing on cable channel six at 6, 7, 8 and 10 a.m., and at 2, 5, 6 and 10 p.m. In addition, links to the CDC and USEPA are available on the Illinois Department of Public Health website www.idph.state.il.us.

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