



BELL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

MOSQUITO SAMPLES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN BELL COUNTY

July 10, 2026 - A mosquito trap collected in West Temple has tested positive for West Nile virus, marking the first positive trap of the 2026 season in Bell County.

This test is part of the Bell County Public Health District (BCPHD) Vector program. The positive test was indicated in the lab results received on July 9th from the Texas Department of State Health Services lab in Austin, TX.

"The detection of West Nile virus in our mosquito traps is a reminder that the risk remains present in our community," said Robert Kirkpatrick Jr., BCPHD Executive Director. "Simple steps like draining standing water and using insect repellent can make a big difference in protecting yourself and your family."

Mosquito control information can be found on the Bell County Public Health District website at https://www.bellcountyhealth.org/environmental_health/environmental_health_services/vector.php.

The most effective way to prevent West Nile virus is to reduce the number of mosquitoes where people work and play. Health officials strongly encourage everyone to remain vigilant about protecting themselves from mosquito bites and preventing mosquito breeding on their personal property. Mosquitoes breed in standing water, needing as little as one teaspoon. By draining all sources of standing water in and around your property, you reduce the number of places mosquitoes can lay their eggs and breed.

Symptoms of infection can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/symptoms/index.html> and may include fever, headache, and body aches, a skin rash on the trunk of the body, and swollen lymph nodes. Those age 50 and older and/or with compromised immune systems are at a higher risk for severe symptoms, which may include stiffness, disorientation, coma, tremors, vision loss, paralysis, and in rare cases, death.

What you can do:

Eliminating places where mosquitoes can breed and reducing the chances of mosquito bites are the most effective lines of defense against exposure to West Nile Virus. As part of its *Fight the Bite* campaign the Health District recommends the 3-Ds of mosquito safety:

- **Drain** standing water in flowerpots, pet dishes, or clogged gutters so mosquitoes don't have a place to breed and treat water that can't be drained,
- **Defend** by using an EPA-registered insect repellent, and
- **Dress** in long sleeves and pants when outdoors.

For more information, go to the Texas Department of State Health Services West Nile website at txwestnile.org.