

## ODA Animal Health and Identification Division

Department

About Us

Contact Us

Animal Health

Animal Health Lab

Livestock ID

Commercial Feed

Forms and Publications

Animal Disease Plan

Avian Influenza Plan

OR Response Plan for Animals In Disasters

### West Nile Virus (WNV)

[Protecting against WNV](#)

[Reporting](#)

[West Nile Virus hotline](#)

[Additional links](#)



#### Protecting against WNV

##### Vaccinate horses

Horse owners in Oregon are being advised to help protect against West Nile Virus by vaccinating their animals and taking steps to control mosquitoes this summer. For those who have already vaccinated their horses in the past, a booster shot will strengthen immunity.

The vaccine for horses is available through local veterinarians.

A low percentage of mosquitoes carry the virus and a low percentage of horses bitten by infected mosquitoes become ill. But a horse showing signs is a serious situation. The disease causes inflammation of the brain and about one-third of affected horses die. Symptoms include stumbling, lack of coordination, weakness in the legs, depression, muscle twitching, and death.

For questions on equine testing contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture, 503-986-4680.

##### Control mosquito breeding sites

Help reduce the number of mosquitoes in areas outdoors where you work or play, by draining sources of standing water. In this way, you reduce the number of places mosquitoes can lay their eggs and breed.

- At least once or twice a week, empty water from flower pots, pet food and water dishes, birdbaths, swimming pool covers, buckets, barrels, and cans.
- Check for clogged rain gutters and clean them out.
- Remove discarded tires, and other items that could collect water.
- Be sure to check for containers or trash in places that may be hard to see, such as under bushes or under your home.

##### Protect yourself

- The hours at dusk and dawn are peak mosquito biting times. Consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times or take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing during evening and early morning. Mosquito activity usually starts by April 15th and decreases significantly by September 15th.
- When possible, wear long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors.
- Treating clothes with repellents containing permethrin or DEET will give extra protection, since mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing. Do not apply repellents containing permethrin directly to skin. Do not spray repellent containing DEET on the skin under your clothing.
- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by getting rid of items that hold water.

Tips for using DEET:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/parc/westnile.cfm>

Individuals and businesses who offer pesticide application services for the control of mosquitoes in Oregon are required to be licensed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture.



## Reporting

To report a dead or ill bird, contact your county health department or vector control agency , or Oregon Fish and Wildlife (phone 503-947-6322, fax 503-947-6330).

To report suspicious illness or death of livestock, contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture, 503-986-4760.

Health care providers and clinical laboratories are required to [report cases and suspect cases](#) of diseases of unusual public health significance **immediately** upon identification. On weekends and holidays, call 503/731-4030 to reach the state health department doctor on call.



## West Nile Virus hotline

Call 503-988-NILE (6453) for more information.



## Additional links

[Oregon DHS West Nile virus Web page](#)

[Food and Drug Administration](#)

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

[Northwest Mosquito and Vector Control Association](#)

[Guidelines for Clinicians](#)

View [maps of West Nile virus in the U.S.](#)



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[Text Only](#) | [State Directories](#) | [Agencies A to Z](#) | [Site Map](#) | [About Oregon.gov](#) | [Oregon.gov](#)

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