NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release   **Contact: Bobbi Kahl (315) 798-3676**

OCHD Tests for Mosquito-borne Diseases

Ninety-seven mosquito pools collected in Oneida County since the beginning of summer and tested for West Nile Virus have yielded one positive results for the disease, Oneida County Health officials said today.

"As part of the Mosquito Surveillance Program the Oneida County Health Department conducts each year from June through September, specimens are submitted to the New York State Department of Health's (NYSDOH) Wadsworth Lab for testing to detect these diseases," Dan Gilmore, Director of Environmental Health said.

West Nile Virus can be transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito and in some cases cause illness in people that can range from mild to severe.

Gilmore stressed that taking "personal protection measures" is the key to reducing the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses:

- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves when outdoors for long periods.
- Use an insect repellant containing DEET carefully following the manufacturer's application instructions.

According to New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), there are steps you can take to reduce mosquito breeding areas around your home:

- Eliminate standing water by discarding outdoor plastic containers, ceramic pots, old tires or other containers that hold water.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Clean clogged rain gutters
- Turn over wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change water in bird baths frequently.
- Clear vegetation and debris around the edge of ponds and use landscaping to eliminate low spots where standing water accumulates.
- Drain water from pool covers and clean chlorinated swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.

For more information on mosquitoes and the illnesses they may carry contact the Oneida County Health Department at (315) 798-5064 or http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/west_nile_virus/fact_sheet.htm

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