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**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Three West Nile Cases Confirmed in El Paso** Public Health officials stress disease prevention

**EL PASO, Texas** – Officials with the City of El Paso Department of Public Health have confirmed three West Nile cases in El Paso. Two females in their late 70's and one male in his 50's, all within the 79925 zip code, have been confirmed as West Nile cases. West Nile Virus continues to raise concerns for health officials across the United States, and experts here in El Paso are asking residents to heed the warnings.

Human infection is the result of bites from infected mosquitoes. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds, which circulate the virus in their blood for a few days. Symptoms of West Nile include fever, headache, tiredness, body aches, nausea, vomiting, and swollen lymph glands.

"We want to remind residents that mosquitoes are vectors for some serious diseases," said Fernando Gonzalez, Lead Epidemiologist. "It is important to follow prevention steps in order to reduce mosquito related diseases like West Nile."

The best way to avoid exposure to mosquito-borne diseases is to practice the "four Ds":

- **DEET** - Use insect repellents containing DEET when you go outdoors. To optimize safety and effectiveness, repellents should be used according to the label instructions.
- **DRESS** - When weather permits, wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing and it's recommended to also spray your clothes with repellent.
- **DUSK and DAWN** – Although mosquitoes associated with West Nile can be active throughout the day, residents should take extra care during peak mosquito biting hours (from dusk to dawn) or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times.
- **DRAIN** - Help reduce the number of mosquitoes around and outside your home by emptying standing water from flowerpots, gutters, buckets, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and birdbaths on a regular basis.

You can also mosquito-proof your home by installing or repairing screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out. To report standing water or mosquito breeding call 3-1-1.

The mission of the City of El Paso Department of Public Health is to provide Public Health related research, evaluation, education, prevention, intervention, and preparedness services. For more information on the programs and services we provide, please dial 2-1-1 or visit [www.EPHealth.com](http://www.EPHealth.com)

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