

plarvae in the water. Remember to always follow label directions in order to determine how many you need for your pond area and be aware of label precautions regarding fish-bearing waters, wildlife, nontarget aquatic life and beneficial insects such as honeybees.

There are several products on the market. Work with your nursery supplier, hardware store or agricultural dealer to find out what options are available from stores close to you. Contact the County Extension Office for more information

Your best option is a good defense. West Nile Virus is here to stay. You must take every precaution to make sure that you and your family are protected from this disease.

HOW DO I PROTECT MY HORSES AND MY PETS?

Protect your horses and pets from West Nile Virus by taking them to your local veterinarian for vaccinations against West Nile Virus.

Horses require an initial vaccine followed by a booster shot 4-6 weeks later. You should consider spraying your horses with fly and mosquito repellent, according to label directions, whenever your horses are in an area close to standing water.

Your veterinarian can best advise you about establishing a vaccination program for your pets. Keep a flea collar on your pets to discourage insects from biting them. Dusting your pets with flea powder on a

regular basis is also a good practice for keeping insects away from your pets.

For more information contact:

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West Nile Virus



What You Should Know

WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

West Nile Virus originated in Africa, West Asia and the Middle East and is now found throughout North America including the United States and, locally in Taos County. This Virus can infect humans, birds, mosquitoes, horses, llamas, dogs, cats and several other mammals.

Although West Nile Virus is typically defined as a “mild disease” by the Center for Disease Control, it has become a concern for people who are over age 50 who are more susceptible to this disease. However, there have been cases in New Mexico of people who are under age 50 who have been severely infected by West Nile Virus. Therefore, taking precautionary measures is important for everyone.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF WEST NILE VIRUS?

If a mosquito infected with West Nile Virus bites you, the Virus begins to multiply in the blood system. Symptoms may include flu-like symptoms of fever, headache and body aches, and a possible skin rash and swollen glands.

In very severe cases, you may develop West Nile Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), West Nile Meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain), or West Nile Meningoencephalitis (inflammation of the brain and the membrane surrounding it).

HOW DO I PROTECT MY FAMILY AND MYSELF?

Although the odds of becoming infected are rare, it is always best to take steps to protect yourself and your family.

Here are some things you can do to protect yourself:

1. When going outdoors use insect repellent on your bare arms and legs. The Center for Disease Control recommends using repellents containing DEET, or N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide. Follow the label directions and reapply after getting wet or sweating profusely.
2. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors.
3. Stay indoors during peak mosquito activity hours, which include early morning and early evening hours or after afternoon rain showers.
4. Eliminate standing water around your house, including tires, tire swings, buckets, barrels and containers.
5. Wash out pet water bowls at least once a week.
6. Place mosquito netting over infant carriers when outdoors
7. Keep screens in good condition to prevent mosquitoes from flying indoors.
8. When spending time on your deck or balcony, a candle or fan will

make the immediate area less hospitable to mosquitoes.

9. Mosquitoes do not like smoke, but citronella may not necessarily have more effect than other smoking devices. Fans oftentimes work better because mosquitoes do not like to fly in the wind.

WHAT IF THERE IS STANDING WATER WHERE I LIVE?

Many people live close to ponds and stock tanks, which cannot be easily drained. In order to keep the mosquito population from increasing, mow weeds and grass down around the water sources.

Acequias are not usually problem areas because water is constantly moving. If there are puddles of water in the acequia for a few days they become breeding areas for mosquitoes, however, these puddles do not usually last too long and the larvae are either washed away or do not survive

Spraying an oil-based repellent on plants may help control mosquitoes. Another control method is stocking your pond or lake with mosquito fish, a top-feeding minnow that feeds on mosquito larvae. Keeping your pond clean and aerated also makes it less attractive to mosquitoes than one that has a lot of vegetation.

Spraying the pond area with insecticides is one way to control the adult mosquito population. Another control method involves the use of mosquito cakes or dunks, which contain Bt, (Bacillus Thuringensis) to the pond area. Bt is a natural bacterium, which kills mosquito