

Since its inception, the Kent County Health Department has strived to provide the best possible service to the people of Kent County.

One of the jobs of the Environmental Health Division is to monitor mosquito activity. They capture them, screen them, and test them for West Nile Virus. They also work to identify invasive species that can potentially carry the Zika virus.

None of the mosquito species that carry the Zika virus have been identified in the area to date. However, the Environmental Health Division continues to monitor to ensure early detection the presence of these mosquito species in our community.

# Kent County Health Department: Environmental Health



Serve, protect and promote a healthy  
community for all.

## Contact Information

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# MOSQUITO SURVEILLAN CE AND PREVENTION

## Mosquito Characteristics

Female mosquitos need blood to help complete the process of laying eggs. Since male mosquitos do not lay eggs, they do not need to feed on blood. So only female mosquitos bite.

While mosquitos may seem like a nuisance, they are important to the ecosystem. Not only are they a food source for frogs, bats and dragonflies, but they also act as pollinators by feeding on nectar.

### Why is this important?

The *Culex* species of mosquito feed on birds, especially the *Corvidae* family; which includes blue jays, robins and crows. Because these birds carry the West Nile Virus, the mosquitoes become infected and transfer the virus to humans. West Nile Virus is present in our community.

## *Culex* species of mosquito



## What is West Nile Virus?

- West Nile Virus is a flavivirus
- 80% who contract the virus develop no symptoms
- 20% develop symptoms like headache, body aches, joint pain, vomiting, diarrhea or rash
- 1% will develop encephalitis or meningitis whose symptoms include headache, fever, stiff neck, disorientation, coma, tremors, seizures or paralysis
- People most susceptible to the virus are the elderly or immunocompromised
- There is no vaccine or cure for West Nile Virus

## Preventative Measures

- Use EPA registered insect repellent with at least 25% DEET content
- Cover exposed skin when able
- Remove any standing water from property
- Avoid areas with high insect concentration during dusk and dawn

## Note on the Zika Virus

The mosquito species that carry the Zika virus are not currently present in our area. However, the Zika virus is still a worldwide concern and can be contract through out-of-state travel and sexual contact. Please contact the Kent County Health Department for more information.