



Contact Person: Bre Potts

West Nile Virus Surveillance and Dead Birds

The McDonough County Health Department is asking for your help in the surveillance of West Nile virus.

West Nile virus is primarily a disease of birds, therefore dead birds are a good indicator that the virus is present. Each year the McDonough County Health Department submits qualifying dead birds to the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Animal Disease Laboratory for testing. A crow, blue jay, grackle, starling, sparrow, finch, robin, cardinal, flycatcher, swallow, catbird, mockingbird, warbler, or wrens, among others are accepted for testing.

The Health Department is asking that citizens report dead birds suspected to have died from West Nile Virus. Birds should not have any obvious sign of death, such as: hit by a car, killed by a predator, or shot by a gun. This will aid in tracking the virus and indicating problem areas.

If you see a dead bird, report it to the Health Department at 837-9951 Monday-Thursday from 7AM to Noon or 1PM to 6PM. You will need to report the following information:

- your name, address, and telephone number
- date and location the bird was found
- type of bird

To ensure that birds are only reported once, please dispose of dead birds safely. Always use plastic gloves when handling dead birds. If plastic gloves are not available, place your hands in plastic bags and use them like gloves. Double bag the bird and dispose of in the trash.

Thank you for your help and your efforts in helping protect McDonough County from West Nile virus.