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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Heather Ilgenfritz, Communications Manager
717.218.2940

Cumberland County Reports West Nile Virus Positive Mosquito Samples

Cumberland County, PA- Cumberland County's Vector Control Office has received confirmation notice from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) of positive mosquito samples for the West Nile Virus (WNV) collected in Cumberland County. A total of nine samples recently collected in seven municipalities have tested positive for WNV. The collection sites are located in the following municipalities: Camp Hill Borough, Monroe Township, South Middleton Township, Southampton Township, Upper Allen Township, Shiremanstown Borough, and Lemoyne Borough.

The key to combatting WNV is successful mosquito control through identification and elimination of mosquito water habitat. Vector Control encourages all residents to help limit and reduce mosquito habitat by dumping any standing water around their property. Stagnant water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Examples of habitat areas include, but are not limited to, flower containers, birdbaths, kiddie pools, clogged rainspouts, storm drains, ponds, unattended swimming pools, construction blocks, and retention ponds. Containers should be emptied every five days to prevent adult mosquitoes from emerging. Water around the home that is unable to be drained can be treated with mosquito dunks or bits that contain *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) used to kill the larvae. These products are safe for use around humans and pets and can be found at hardware and other local retailers.

Mosquitoes transmit the WNV by feeding on infected birds, and then transmit it when they bite other birds, animals, and humans. WNV is not spread by person-to-person contact. One in five people infected with WNV develop a mild infection called West Nile Fever; displaying aches, fever, skin rash, and swollen lymph nodes. With rest and fluids, most people recover in a few days. Less than 1% of infections develop into a severe life-threatening infection, West Nile Encephalitis. Symptoms in severe cases include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, muscle weakness, disorientation, tremors and convulsions requiring immediate medical treatment.

Vector Control will continue to conduct enhanced surveillance at collection sites throughout Cumberland County. The WNV program applies an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan to control mosquitoes while limiting the effects on people and the environment. For more information about the West Nile Virus Control Program in Cumberland County and tips on how to protect yourself from WNV visit www.ccpa.net/vector.

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