



Waukesha County

Department of Health and Human Services

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MOSQUITO SPECIES CAPABLE OF TRANSMITTING ZIKA FOUND IN WAUKESHA COUNTY

No Evidence of Zika-Infected Mosquitoes or Locally Transmitted Zika in Midwest

(WAUKESHA, WI) – Waukesha County Public Health officials want members of the public to know there is likely no increased risk of Zika infection even though the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito has been found in the county. *Aedes albopictus* is one type of mosquito that is capable of spreading the Zika virus, however there is no evidence of Zika-infected mosquitoes in Wisconsin. This is the second documentation of this species of mosquito in Wisconsin this summer.

While it is possible that *Aedes albopictus* could transmit Zika, a different species, *Aedes aegypti*, is the primary carrier of the infection. *Aedes aegypti* lives in warmer climates, and has not been found in Wisconsin or any neighboring states.

“The detection of the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito in Waukesha County is not a cause for alarm,” said Ben Jones, Waukesha County Public Health Officer. “Several nearby states also have small numbers of these mosquitoes, where Zika virus has not been locally spread. However, we want to remind residents to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites. Other serious diseases, including West Nile Virus, are spread by mosquitoes in our state.”

Teams are currently assessing how widespread *Aedes albopictus* is in Waukesha County and other parts of the state. The mosquito has been detected in Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois for several years, with no widespread populations of this species becoming established and no known cases of locally transmitted Zika virus in the Midwest.

Wisconsin residents at risk for Zika virus infection are people who have traveled or had sexual contact with someone who traveled to [locations with active Zika virus transmission](#). The detection of *Aedes albopictus* in Wisconsin does not change the [precautions that The Wisconsin Department of Health recommends](#) for people with a possible exposure to Zika virus. Anyone who may have been exposed to Zika should contact their doctor if they experience fever, rash, joint pain, or red eyes within two weeks of possible exposure, and avoid mosquito bites for at least three weeks after they first become ill or after last possible exposure (if there are no symptoms).

Page 1 of 2

To protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes to minimize exposed skin.
- Use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellent on any exposed skin and apply it according to the label instructions.
- Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spray clothes with a repellent containing permethrin or DEET to give extra protection. Do not use permethrin directly on skin.
- Stay and sleep in places with air conditioning and/or screened-in windows.
- Prevent standing water in your yard by disposing discarded cans, plastic containers, or tires; draining standing water from pool or hot tub covers; turning over plastic wading pools and wheel barrows when not in use; keeping drains, ditches and culverts and gutters clean of trash, weeds and debris to ensure they drain properly.

About Wisconsin's Mosquito Surveillance Activities

Since 2016, the University of Wisconsin Medical Entomology Laboratory has been working with state and local health officials and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to perform active surveillance for *Aedes* species mosquitoes in Wisconsin

About Waukesha County's Public Health Division

The Public Health Division is committed to preventing disease and promoting health for all citizens in Waukesha County. The division offers a wide range of public health services focused on the control and containment of human public health hazards.

More information is available at www.waukeshacounty.gov/publichealth.

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