

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Becky Pattillo, Acting City Secretary
Public Information Officer**

The City of Commerce, with the assistance of Texas A&M University – Commerce, has been trapping mosquitoes and sending them to the Department of State Health Services as a precautionary measure to test for various diseases. Emergency Management Officials have been notified that two of the samples have tested positive for the West Nile Virus. At this time, no human cases of West Nile have been received in the Hunt County area.

West Nile is typically spread to humans and animals via infected mosquitoes, who are infected by feeding on infected birds. Most people infected with the virus have no symptoms. About twenty percent will develop a mild infection called West Nile Fever. Common symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, fatigue, back pain and occasionally a skin rash, swollen lymph glands and eye pain.

City Staff will begin spraying for mosquitoes in the areas where there were positive tests and will continue for three days, beginning tonight, July 6, 2016. The spraying is more effective if it takes place during peak mosquito biting hours. Crews will begin spraying around 7:30 p.m. Emergency Management Officials will continue to test for infected mosquitoes in all areas of Commerce as long as the threat continues.

The chemical used in the spray is of low toxicity to humans and pets, but it is a pesticide and direct contact should be avoided. Citizens should go indoors and stay back from the truck during spraying operations. The chemical will not be sprayed if the driver sees people outdoors. This product is extremely toxic to fish and fishponds should be covered.

Although the chemicals will greatly reduce the number of mosquitoes, the spray will not eliminate all chances of getting bit. Residents should take the following precautionary measures to avoid being bit:

Consider staying indoors during peak mosquito biting times – dusk and dawn.

Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants that are light colors. Mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors.

Apply an insect repellent that contains DEET.

Limit the number of places that mosquitoes can breed by eliminating the standing water sources around your home. Drill holes in tire swings so that the water drains out and always empty children's wading pools and store them on their side after using them.

Try to pick a breezy location when enjoying the outdoors. Mosquitoes have a hard time flying even in a light wind.

For additional information on West Nile visit

www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/disease/arboviral/westnile/information OR www.cdc.gov/westnile.