**First Human West Nile Virus Positive Case and First West Nile Virus Positive Mosquito Pool Reported in Kansas for 2013**

**Topeka, Kan.** – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) today announced the first reported case of West Nile virus of 2013. This individual is an adult from Atchison County. KDHE has also just learned of the first West Nile virus positive mosquito pool in Kansas for 2013. The positive mosquito pool was collected from Sedgwick County.

West Nile Virus can be spread to people through bites from infected mosquitoes, but it is not contagious from person to person. Symptoms range from a slight headache and low-grade fever to swelling of the brain or brain tissue and in rare cases, death. People who have had West Nile virus before are considered immune.

KDHE recommends the following precautions to protect against West Nile Virus:

* When you are outdoors, use insect repellent containing an EPA-registered active ingredient on skin and clothing, including DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Follow the directions on the package.
* Many mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours.
* Make sure you have good screens on your windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out.
* Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flower pots, buckets and  barrels. Change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used.

Cases are most common in the late summer and early fall months. In 2012, there were 57 cases of West Nile virus in the state, the most cases since the virus first made its way into Kansas in 2002. In addition to tracking cases of human illnesses caused by West Nile virus, KDHE assesses the potential for West Nile virus by conducting limited mosquito surveillance, including laboratory testing.

Birds are not tested for West Nile Virus in Kansas and KDHE will not be collecting information about dead birds. If you find a dead bird, KDHE recommends that you wear gloves, place the bird in a plastic bag, and dispose of it in the garbage.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides this web page with additional information about West Nile Virus and preventing mosquito bites: http://www.cdc.gov/features/StopMosquitoes/.