



## The Regional Municipality of Durham Health Department

# NEWS RELEASE

### Bird tests positive for WNV in Clarington

#### REVISED – 9:45 a.m.

**WHITBY, ON, September 14, 2005** – Durham Region Health Department reports that a crow picked up in Clarington has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). The bird was picked up on Aug. 8 and submitted for testing to the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Centre in Guelph on Aug. 12. Confirmation was received on Sept. 13. This now brings to eight the number of positive birds in Durham Region this season.

In addition, the Health Department reports that the virus has been detected in a pool (batch) of mosquitoes in the Pickering area. As a result of this and the positive birds reported in Pickering on Aug. 30, Health Department officials continue to stress the importance of protecting against mosquito bites.

“Although we’re approaching the end of the summer season, we know that West Nile virus activity continues to be detected in a number of areas of the Region,” said Dr. Donna Reynolds, Durham Region Associate Medical Officer of Health. “It’s still important for area residents to remember that mosquitoes remain active. Until temperatures cool, we encourage everyone to continue taking precautions to protect against mosquito bites.” Durham Region continues to report no human cases so far this season.

The Health Department’s mosquito surveillance program is scheduled to continue depending on the night time temperature. To date, over 23,100 mosquitoes have been trapped as part of the adult mosquito trapping program. To minimize the risk of mosquito bites the Health Department recommends:

- avoiding areas with high mosquito populations
- taking extra precautions from dusk to dawn when mosquitoes are most active
- using a mosquito repellent that contains DEET, carefully following manufacturers’ instructions (adults should wear a repellent with no more than 30 per cent DEET; for children six-months to two-years old, a less concentrated DEET product (10 per cent or less) should be used and applied once a day; for children two- to 12-years old, apply the less concentrated DEET product no more than three times daily)
- wearing light-coloured clothing (mosquitoes are attracted to darker colours), including long sleeves, pants, socks and a hat to cover exposed skin
- making sure all windows and doors in the home have tight fitting screens and are in good condition
- getting rid of stagnant water that remains for more that a week around the outside of the home to help eliminate potential breeding sites

For more information on WNV or to report sightings of dead crows, blue jays or raptors, please call the Health Department’s Environmental Help Line at 905-668-7711 or 1-800-841-2729, ext. 3232. Sightings can also be reported online at [www.region.durham.on.ca](http://www.region.durham.on.ca).