



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**10/02/2025**

**CONTACT:**

Holly Young

Health Promotions Manager

[Hyoung@vbcassdhd.org](mailto:Hyoung@vbcassdhd.org)

**Cass County Bird Tested Positive for West Nile Virus**

*Tips and Resources for Vector-Borne Diseases*

**Lawrence, MI** – Van Buren/Cass District Health Department (VBCDHD) has been notified by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that a great blue heron found in Cass County has tested positive for **West Nile virus**. This finding adds to the statewide total of 69 birds testing positive for West Nile Virus so far in 2025 in Michigan. The result will be included in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' weekly arbovirus surveillance summary: <https://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases>.

West Nile virus is the most common mosquito-borne illness in Michigan and across the United States. West Nile virus is a vector-borne virus carried by mosquitoes that can cause mild to severe illness in humans and animals. Most people infected with West Nile virus do not experience any symptoms, but about one in five may develop a mild illness called West Nile fever, which can cause fever, headache, body aches, fatigue, and sometimes a skin rash. In rare cases, the virus can cause severe neurological illness.

Community members are encouraged to take simple steps to protect themselves and reduce mosquito breeding:

- Remove standing water from containers like flowerpots, buckets, tires, and gutters where mosquitoes can breed.
- Use insect repellent registered with the EPA, such as those containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Wear long sleeves and pants when outdoors, especially during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.

Residents are reminded that while the detection of West Nile virus in birds does not guarantee human cases, it serves as an early warning that the virus is present in the local mosquito population. VBCDHD will continue working with state partners to monitor mosquito activity and provide timely updates to the community. To learn more about local programs, services, and public health updates, visit the VBCDHD website at <https://vbcassdhd.org/>