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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Department encourages residents to protect against mosquito borne illnesses

A human case of West Nile Virus has been confirmed in Orleans County. "West Nile Virus is most commonly spread by the bite of an infected mosquito," stated Paul Pettit, Public Health Director for the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments (GO Health). "The best protection against West Nile Virus and other mosquito-related illnesses is to prevent mosquito bites."

Residents are encouraged to practice the following precautions:
- Use an EPA-registered insect repellant and follow product label instructions. To find the best repellant for you, visit https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents.
- Minimize exposed skin by wearing protective clothing like long sleeves and long pants tucked into socks, especially when outdoors at dusk or dawn when mosquitos are most active.
- Wear clothing and gear treated with permethrin.
- Reduce mosquito population around your home and property by removing any standing water, such as by emptying buckets, containers, pots, planters, and pool covers.

West Nile Virus infections occur most often during summer and early fall. Most people who are infected with West Nile Virus do not show any symptoms. According to the New York State Department of Health, roughly 20% of infected individuals will develop mild symptoms, including fever, headache, body aches, nausea, diarrhea, and rash. Severe illness may cause high fever, headache, neck stiffness, muscle weakness, disorientation, paralysis, and, in some cases, death. Individuals over the age of 50 are at highest risk for serious illness.

For more information on West Nile Virus, visit the New York State Department of Health.

For more information about GO Health Programs and services, visit GOHealthNY.org or contact your local health department at:

- Genesee County: 585-344-2580 ext. 5555
- Orleans County: 585-589-3278

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