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NEWS RELEASE

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SLVHD Reports First Human Case of WNV in County This year

(Salt Lake County) – The Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) today announced the first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Salt Lake County this year. The individual, who is between the ages of 18 – 64, was diagnosed with West Nile fever – a less severe form of the virus – is recuperating at home and was not hospitalized.

“So far this year, we’ve had only a handful of mosquito pools which have tested positive for WNV and our MIR* is still low,” explained Dr. Dagmar Vitek, SLVHD Deputy Director. “It is a good example though, that even when testing hasn’t shown a lot of WNV activity in mosquitoes or wild birds, people should still take precautions to protect themselves during the mosquito biting season.”

Large-scale aerial pesticide spraying is recommended by the health department when the MIR reaches a calculated total of “4”. The MIR in Salt Lake County is currently at .27.

Additionally, this case is about two weeks earlier than human cases in 2006, and about six weeks earlier than in 2005. In 2006, SL County had 55 chases reported with 22 diagnosed as neuro-invasive and 33 as fever. In 2005, there was a total of five cases; all neuro-invasive.

For more information on West Nile Virus, visit the SLVHD website at www.slvhealth.org.

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The MIR (Minimum Infection Rate) is a CDC calculation used to estimate the infected mosquito rate in a given area. That number is then used to determine at what point aerial mosquito pesticide spraying should be implemented.