FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 25, 2012

First positive West Nile Virus mosquito pool Discovered in Pottstown Borough

May 25, 2012 (Norristown, PA) — The Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) was notified that one mosquito pool tested West Nile Virus positive from Pottstown Borough. This was confirmed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health Bureau of Labs. This is the first WNV positive mosquito pool in Montgomery County for 2012.

MCHD has had 48 mosquito pools tested for WNV, with one testing positive. No confirmed human cases of active WNV Disease have been reported to MCHD.

A mosquito pool is a collection of mosquitoes (usually about 50) of any given species or group (i.e. Culex mosquitoes) that are likely to carry/transmit a virus.

MCHD will enhance existing larvae and adult mosquito collections in the area where the WNV positive mosquito pool was found. Additional controls will be taken as needs are identified.

MCHD will not send out further press releases regarding positive mosquito pools. We will announce when spraying for WNV will occur. Residents can also receive information about spraying by signing up for ReadyNotifyPA at http://montco.alertpa.org.

For 2011, Montgomery County had a total of 809 mosquito pools tested with 50 pools testing positive for WNV. There were no confirmed human cases of WNV Disease reported.

To reduce the risk of contracting West Nile Disease here are some steps residents can take:

- Make sure gutters and drainpipes are clean and running freely.
- Check and repair windows and screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering the home.
- Survey property and remove containers that collect standing water such as: old tires, cans, bottles, buckets, toys, kiddie pools, pool covers, bird baths, flowerpots and empty plant containers.
• Avoid mosquito-breeding areas during peak periods of mosquito activity.
• Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, making sure to cover feet and ankles.
• Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. FOLLOW THE LABEL DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY. Do NOT apply to face.
• NEVER ALLOW CHILDREN TO APPLY REPELLENTS. Parents should avoid applying repellents to the hands of children
• Repellents should NOT be applied to very young children (less than 3 years old).
• Discuss any concerns with a private physician.

Since 2006 MCHD has not been collecting dead birds, or dead bird reports. While dead bird surveillance has been a useful indicator in the past, the presence of the virus is now well-established in Montgomery County. Because West Nile virus is spread to humans through infected mosquitoes, not birds, our program is focused on preventing and controlling mosquitoes.

Residents may still report a dead bird by going to the Pennsylvania West Nile website at http://www.westnile.state.pa.us/.

For more information on WNV disease please contact the Montgomery County Health Department (610) 278-5117 or visit the Montgomery County Health Department Web Site: www.health.montcopa.org.

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