

The Pump Handle



"I had an interview with the Board of Guardians of St. James's parish, on the evening of Thursday, 7th September, and represented the above circumstances to them. In consequence of what I said, the handle of the pump was removed on the following day."

John Snow, 1855

June 2007 Topics

- First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported in North Dakota
- Rabies Update
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First Human Case of West Nile Virus Reported in North Dakota

As of June 29, 2007, one human WNV infection has been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health. Three dead bird samples have been submitted to the NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for West Nile virus testing. One dead bird from Grand Forks County and one from Cass County have tested positive for WNV. In addition, 85 sentinel chicken serums have been tested, with no virus identified. There have been more than 67 dead birds from across the state reported online.

In the United States as of June 12, 2007, six human West Nile virus cases have been reported to the CDC from Iowa (1), Mississippi (4) and South Dakota (1). Visit www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm for nationwide WNV data.

For more information about WNV, visit the North Dakota Department of Health website at www.ndhealth.gov/wnv.



Rabies Update

The North Dakota Department of Health recently investigated an animal bite from a kitten purchased at a pet store. Two days after the kitten was purchased, it presented with symptoms indicative of rabies. As a result, the kitten was euthanized and submitted for testing. While awaiting test results, three individuals began post-exposure prophylaxis. Follow-up was also done on all littermates and the mother cat, as well as pet store workers. The kitten tested negative for rabies, and post-exposure prophylaxis was terminated.

Thus far, 11 animals in North Dakota have tested positive for rabies in 2007.

Animal Type	Number Positive	
	2007*	2006
Bat	0	1
Cat	1	0
Cow	1	3
Dog	2	4
Goat	1	0
Horse	1	0
Skunk	7	9
Total	11	17

*Preliminary data, year-to-date ending June 30, 2007

For more information about rabies, visit www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Rabies/.



Prevent Summertime Foodborne Illnesses

Incidence of infections associated with foodborne illnesses increase in the summer. Since summertime is when many people enjoy backyard barbecues, picnics or dinners around a campfire, it is important to remind people of proper handling and preparation of food to prevent illnesses this summer.

Improper handling and cooking of poultry products and ground beef are common sources of foodborne illnesses, such as salmonella, campylobacter and *E. coli*. These diseases can cause diarrhea, bloody diarrhea, abdominal cramping, nausea and vomiting. Young children and the elderly are at greatest risk for severe illness, such as dehydration, infection of the bloodstream and kidney failure.

The following tips can help keep summertime food safe:

- Always wash your hands before preparing food, after handling raw foods and before eating. If warm running water and soap are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Keep cold foods – such as sliced fruits and vegetables, cold salads and meat trays – cold. During summer picnics, it is important to pack a refrigerator thermometer in your cooler to ensure the food in the cooler is kept at 40 degrees F or below.
- Cook foods properly. Cook meat to proper internal temperatures.
 - Poultry breasts to 165 degrees F.
 - Ground beef to 155 degrees F.
 - Pork and fish to 145 degrees F.
- Wash fruits and vegetables before slicing and serving.
- Use pasteurized egg products for items not cooked thoroughly, such as homemade ice cream and raw cookie dough.
- Do not drink unpasteurized milk.

Some foodborne illnesses – including norovirus, hepatitis A, shigella and *E. coli* – also can be spread easily in contaminated water and from direct contact with infected people. For that reason, people who have diarrhea should not go swimming, work as food handlers or in a health-care setting, or attend day care. Prompt identification and reporting from physicians and laboratories are necessary to prevent the illness from spreading. Notify your local or state

public health department for more information if any cases are identified associated with these risk factors.

Last summer, the North Dakota Department of Health investigated a large shigella outbreak that sickened more than 200 people. Many of the illnesses occurred because of contact with infected people, most likely through improper hand washing. Nine additional foodborne outbreaks were investigated in 2006 that affected another 200 people.

For more information or to report a possible foodborne illness, contact Julie Goplin, North Dakota Department of Health, at 800.472.2180.

Contributing authors of The Pump Handle include Michelle Feist, Erin Fox, Julie Goplin, Tracy Miller and Kirby Kruger. For questions, suggestions or inquiries, or to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Julie Goplin of the Division of Disease Control at 701.328.2375 or by email at jgoplin@nd.gov.

The pump handle picture in the title was obtained from the website www.ph.ucla.edu/epi/snow.html.



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