



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Barbara Mitchell, Public Information Officer

Barbara.mitchell@jocogov.org

Jennifer Dunlay, Risk Communicator

Jennifer.Dunlay@jocogov.org

Johnson County Department of Health and Environment Media Line: (913) 477-8436

Zika virus confirmed in Johnson County resident

Laboratory results confirm the first travel-associated case

Johnson County, Kan. (June 18, 2016) – The Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) received test results that confirm the first travel-associated case of Zika virus in Johnson County. The person tested has a history of travel to an area where mosquitoes are spreading Zika virus. The department will not provide additional details about the case to protect the privacy of the individual.

“Because this case was acquired while traveling, we want to emphasize that the risk of contracting Zika virus in our area is extremely low,” says Lougene Marsh, JCDHE director. “We have provided information to the individual about avoiding mosquito bites to prevent further spread of the virus,” said Marsh.

Marsh says travelers returning to the United States from an area with active Zika virus transmission should take steps to prevent mosquito bites for at least three weeks so they do not spread Zika locally. JCDHE is currently conducting a study with the University of Kansas to determine the extent to which mosquitoes capable of carrying the Zika virus are present in Johnson County.

JCDHE and CDC also recommend that pregnant women not travel to areas with Zika. Zika virus can be spread from a pregnant woman to her fetus and can cause microcephaly, a serious birth defect of the brain and other birth defects in babies of mothers who had Zika virus while pregnant. Zika also can be spread sexually from a man to his partner. Anyone concerned about getting Zika from sex should abstain or use condoms correctly every time they have vaginal, anal, or oral sex.

JCDHE and CDC suggest people take these steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites:

- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or para-

menthane-diol. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breast-feeding women.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Stay in places with air conditioning and window and door screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Take steps to control mosquitoes inside and outside your home. Empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out any items that hold water like tires, buckets, planters, gutters and downspouts, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers. Mosquitoes lay eggs near water.

For additional information about Zika, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/>

###

About Johnson County, Kansas

Located in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, Johnson County, Kansas is a community of choice with a current population of more than 570,000, making it the most populated of the 105 counties in Kansas, but traditionally having the lowest mill levy in the state. For more information visit the county's website at www.iocogov.org.