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NEWS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

From: Saginaw County Mosquito Abatement Commission
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West Nile Virus Found in Saginaw County Crow

Routine mosquito-borne disease surveillance conducted by the Saginaw County Mosquito Abatement Commission (SCMAC) has detected the first evidence of West Nile virus (WNV) within Saginaw County this year. This mosquito-borne virus was found in a dead crow reported and collected in Saginaw Township in early September. West Nile virus is often detected this time of year and reminds us that mosquitoes can be more than just a nuisance. This initial detection of WNV is in addition to ten detections of Jamestown Canyon virus found in Saginaw County mosquitoes. While the threat of mosquito-borne virus infection in Saginaw County remains low, precautions should continue to avoid mosquito biting activity.

The best way to prevent mosquito-borne disease is to protect yourself and family from mosquito bites:

- *Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, especially between dusk and dawn.*
- *When outdoors wear shoes and socks, light colored long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.*
- *Apply an insect repellent that contains DEET, or other EPA-approved products according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants.*
- *Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. Try to keep doors and windows shut, especially at night.*
- *Eliminate all sources of standing water around the yard that can support mosquito breeding, including water in buckets, wading pools, old tires, and any other object holding water. Contact SCMAC to report standing water in roadside ditches, flooded yards, fields, or similar locations that may produce mosquitoes.*

SCMAC maintains an aggressive surveillance and control effort throughout the summer targeting communities and habitats that favor the mosquito species responsible for mosquito-borne disease. If necessary, enhanced surveillance and control operations will be conducted in areas of known disease transmission, if necessary. Control efforts are also ongoing throughout the County for other mosquito nuisance as well.

Mosquito-borne viruses are transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird or mammal host. Human infections are rarely diagnosed as most infections result in no symptoms (asymptomatic). When symptoms present, they include sudden onset of flu-like

illness with fever. Severe cases, although rare, may develop neurologic symptoms such as meningitis or encephalitis requiring hospitalization.

SCMAC will continue to monitor mosquito-borne virus through the end of September. **Citizens are encouraged to take appropriate measures to avoid mosquitoes and are strongly encouraged to contact the Commission's office at (989) 755-5751 if they notice a crow or blue jay that has been dead for less than 24 hours.** These birds are of value to WNV surveillance as they suffer a high mortality from the virus.

Further information and links can be found on SCMAC's website, saginawmosquito.com.