



# News Release

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BENTON-FRANKLIN  
HEALTH DISTRICT  
[www.bfhd.wa.gov](http://www.bfhd.wa.gov)

KENNEWICK  
7102 West Okanogan  
Place

PASCO  
412 West Clark Street

PROSSER  
310 Seventh Avenue

## WEST NILE VIRUS MEETINGS BEGIN FOR 2009

*Local Partners Work to Prevent WNV in our Community*

The Benton-Franklin Health District continues to host a monthly roundtable meeting to coordinate West Nile Virus education and prevention strategies with local agency representatives. The first meeting for 2009 will be held this afternoon. Surveillance for dead birds in Washington State will not begin until July 1, 2009.

Today's meeting will also include representatives from local mosquito control districts, local health departments, and state agencies.

The meeting will be held from 1:30-3:00 Thursday May 28, 2009 at the Benton-Franklin Health District Kennewick Office at 7102 West Okanogan Place.

You are invited to attend. For more information, please contact Susan Shelton.

Scheduled Agenda:

- **Quick Introductions & Updates on Vector-Related Winter Activities**
  - Participants
- **The Year in Review: WNV in 2008 from a National, Regional, and Washington Perspective**
  - Susan Shelton
- **Educational and Press Release Materials Currently Available**
- **Anticipated Regional Activities in 2009**

Residents may monitor the presence of West Nile virus in our community and the northwest through BFHD's West Nile Website at [www.bfhd.wa.gov/wnv](http://www.bfhd.wa.gov/wnv).

### West Nile virus

Originally discovered in Africa in 1937, West Nile virus was first detected in the Western Hemisphere in 1999 in New York City. Since then, it has spread across the United States and caused seasonal epidemics of West Nile virus infection with symptoms ranging from fever to severe neurological disease. West Nile virus is spread to people and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito.

Mosquitoes become infected with the virus when they bite infected birds. The virus is not spread from person-to-person contact.

### BFHD works to prevent the spread of West Nile virus in the community

BFHD conducts dead bird surveillance, monitors West Nile virus activity in the area, coordinates a monthly stakeholder meeting, tracks human cases, and educates the public and medical community on West Nile virus.

**2008 West Nile virus activity in Washington**  
Last year, 24 birds, 41 horses, and 3 people tested positive for West Nile virus in Washington.

West Nile Virus Websites:

BFHD West Nile Website  
[www.bfhd.wa.gov/wnv](http://www.bfhd.wa.gov/wnv)

Washington Department of Health  
[www.doh.wa.gov/westnile](http://www.doh.wa.gov/westnile)

Centers for Disease Control  
[www.cdc.gov/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile)

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