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DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/14/12 DATE OF ARTICLE 1/31/12 NEWSPAPER FWST

Tarrant County records first West Nile virus death

A Euless woman in her 60s has died of illness associated with West Nile virus, the first death in Tarrant County this year attributed to the mosquito-borne virus, public health officials reported Tuesday.

The woman had underlying health conditions, according to Tarrant County Public Health. Further information was withheld because of federal medical privacy laws, including when she died.

Euless City Manager Gary McKamie said the city's public works department was notified of the death Tuesday and was told only that the woman lived in the 76039 ZIP code, an area north of Harwood Road and east of Main Street.

"But I don't know anything other than it was a senior citizen with underlying health issues," McKamie said. "We don't know if the infection happened in the area where the person lived."

The county has reported 67 cases of West Nile infection, the most since 2009, when 32 human cases and three deaths were reported.

Dallas County has reported five deaths and 100 infections. In Denton County, 38 cases and no deaths have been reported. Johnson County has had five reported cases, and Parker County has had one.

"We want people to really continue to be vigilant with the efforts they are making around their homes," said Vanassa Joseph, Tarrant County Public Health spokeswoman. "Part of what we are dealing with is that we had a mild winter and wet spring. That just set the stage for the potential increase in mosquito activity."

Staying vigilant

People 50 and older are particularly susceptible to the West Nile virus, which can cause two illnesses -- the more serious neuroinvasive form and West Nile fever, which has milder symptoms. Of the 67 cases diagnosed in Tarrant County, 42 are West Nile fever; the rest are neuroinvasive, Joseph said.

Tarrant County tests mosquitoes. Cities are responsible for preventive measures.

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Eules' public works department, which handles the city's mosquito abatement, has been spraying every other week since April. Still, the city, which gets a weekly report from the county, was told Tuesday that it had two mosquito pools that tested positive for West Nile.

"I can't tell you how many," McKamie said. "We spray based on what's found. But in general we've been doing citywide spraying every other week."

Current statewide figures on West Nile infections are unavailable, but the disease has been reported elsewhere in the state. Travis County reported its first death associated with West Nile virus Tuesday, according to the Austin American-Statesman.

Heat emergencies

Tarrant County is experiencing a second public health concern: Emergency rooms are reporting increased numbers of heat-related illnesses as temperatures in triple digits continue, public health officials say.

Numbers from the 46 hospitals that voluntarily provide data to the health department show that 32 people visited emergency rooms June 21-28 and July 19-26.

"Both those periods correspond with the onset of average temperatures increasing to near record highs," said Dennis Cavanaugh, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Fort Worth.

No heat deaths have been recorded in Tarrant County, but since May 1 hospitals have recorded 189 emergency room visits due to the heat. The percentage of emergency visits attributable to the heat rose from 10 percent in the week ending July 19 to 24 percent in the week ending July 26, according to the health department.

Tuesday's high of 106 tied a record set for the day in 1980, 1986 and 1998.

Mitch Mitchell, 817-390-7752

Terry Evans, 817-390-7620

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Tarrant County records its first West Nile virus-related death of the summer: a Euless woman in her 60s



By Robert Wilonsky

rwilonsky@dallasnews.com

4:26 pm on July 31, 2012 | [Permalink](#)



Moments after we received word that the state will provide Dallas County with enough mosquito larvicide and adulticide to get through this dangerous West Nile season that has so far seen five die from the virus, Tarrant County dispatched this note: It has recorded its first West Nile-related death. Per the release, the deceased is a Euless woman in her 60s. The county says she had underlying medical conditions.

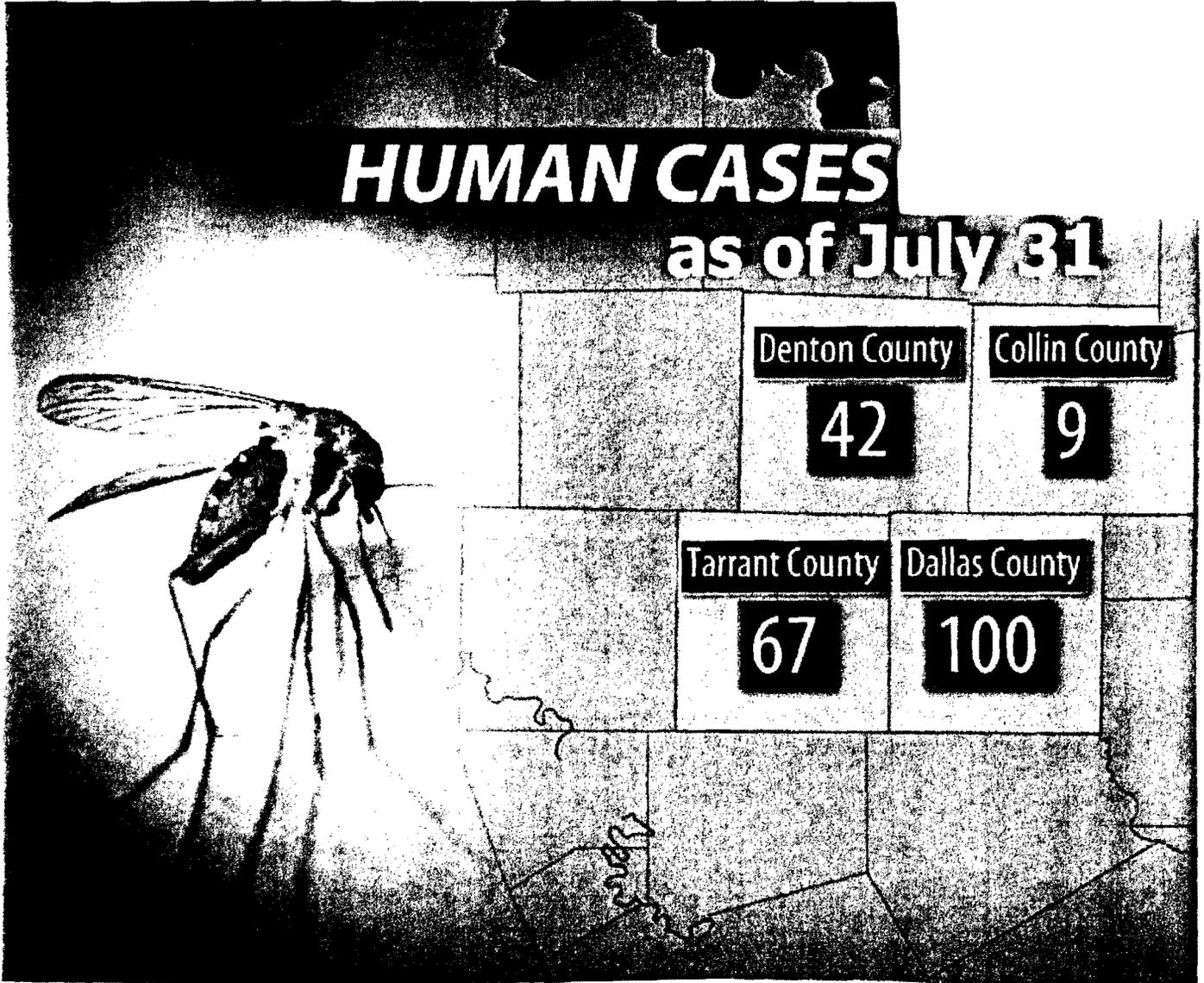
Tarrant County says this is the first death related to West Nile virus since 2009; that year, the county saw three deaths.

The county website says so far this year there are 67 confirmed human cases, and 43 mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile. In all of 2006, Tarrant County recorded 53 human cases of West Nile; seven died that year.

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Eules woman is Tarrant County's first West Nile fatality



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Health officials in Tarrant County have recorded the year's first death associated with West Nile virus.

Tarrant County Public Health said the victim was a Euless resident in her 60s with an underlying medical condition. The woman's identity was not released.

The county's last West Nile death was in 2009, when there were three fatalities. Seven Tarrant County residents were felled by the disease in 2006.

So far in 2012, there have been 67 human cases of WNV reported in Tarrant County -- more than any previous year.

A total of five West Nile-related deaths have been reported this year in neighboring Dallas County, which is the epicenter of the epidemic with a total of 100 human cases. Never before has the mosquito-borne disease claimed as many lives in Dallas County.

Travis County health officials on Tuesday announced the first West Nile death in Austin since a 2003 outbreak.

According to state health officials who studied figures between 2002 and 2010, the average fatality rate among people who are diagnosed with West Nile virus is 9.2 percent.

The peak year for WNV in Texas was 2006, with 33 fatalities statewide.

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DATE DISTRIBUTED 8/14/12 DATE OF ARTICLE 7/31/12 NEWSPAPER CBS 11 News

First West Nile Death Reported In Tarrant County

TARRANT COUNTY (CBS 11 NEWS)- A Euless woman became the first person in Tarrant County to die this year after contracting West Nile Virus. It's the sixth death in North Texas this summer and the first in Tarrant County since 2009.

The woman was in her 60's and had underlying medical conditions according to the Tarrant County Public Health. It brought the number of cases in Tarrant County to 67. That's the highest total since there were 53 cases and 7 deaths in 2006.

"I do think they will continue to increase," said county medical director Dr. Sandra Parker. "But we do want to stress those prevention measures because they do work."

Tarrant has relied on prevention measures rather than spraying for mosquitoes. Euless is one of the few cities in Tarrant that has chosen to spray and was spraying across a large portion of the city Tuesday. It covers the entire city rather than just small sections like some municipalities do. The city manager told CBS11 he expected to continue spraying as long as its needed.

Despite the death in Euless, prevention measures are still not something everyone is practicing even if they're aware of it.

John Gonzalez, who lives in Euless, said he hasn't noticed a particularly bad mosquito problem.

"I'm aware of it, but you're right, not too concerned about it," he said at a park Tuesday. "Probably should be."

Likewise Darla McLaughlin said she hasn't done anything different when taking her two-year-old son Tristan outside, though they're not out that much in summer due to the heat.

"This is probably the first time in a couple weeks that we've actually been out," she said.

Euless has neighborhoods with heavy tree cover and natural creeks, which Parker said is a topography more common in Dallas County, and one mosquitoes find more inviting. That difference is one possible reason she said Tarrant has had fewer cases than Dallas County so far this season.

"It changes to less trees to more of a grassy prairie type terrain and the mosquitoes don't like that as much," she said.

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Spray Or Not: DFW Cities Differ In West Nile Fight

August 1, 2012 10:22 PM

EULESS (CBS 11 NEWS) – The mosquito is a common enemy, carrying an increasingly common and dangerous virus.

It's hard to find two plans to combat West Nile Virus, however, that are the same.

We contacted cities from Addison to Wylie to find out what they are doing and asked if they spray when there is a positive test for West Nile.

Of the 80 cities we could reach, more than half (44) are spraying for mosquitos. Six are considering it, and 30 are not.

It is predominately cities in Tarrant County and rural areas that have chosen not to spray for the insects. It's far more complicated though than just yes or no.

In an e-mail response, Watauga said it doesn't spray to "...prevent contamination from waterways, lakes and streams. There are also citizens that have respiratory problems."

In nearby Hurst though, it hasn't been a problem.

"I have not had one phone call from a resident saying it's caused them any problems." said Jerry Joslin, an environmental specialist with the City of Hurst.

We found most of the cities that spray like to keep it focused, covering small areas and neighborhoods. But not all of them do the same. Eules, for example, sprays the entire city and covers it over a period of four days.

Some just let environmental departments make the call. Others require city council approval.

And public pressure is something for which cities are prepared.

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Two explosions at Eules house fire

Posted: Aug 05, 2012 7:27 PM CDT Updated: Aug 05, 2012 7:27 PM CDT

By: **Natalie Solis**

Firefighters responded to a home in the 300 block of Westover in Eules Sunday afternoon. They arrived to find the garage doors blown off, then a second explosion occurred.

Eules Fire Chief Wes Rhodes says the fire spread to the car and then to the house. Additional crews from several other cities were called in to assist because of the extreme heat.

"It stresses firefighters out a great deal because it wears them out so quickly, dehydrates them," says Chief Rhodes.

Firefighters gained control of the flames in about an hour.

No one was home at the time the fire started. No firefighters were injured.