

The West Nile Weekly

What does this week look like historically?

Historically, around 49% of total cases for the year, 1 in 2, have been transmitted by the end of this week. In all years except for 2012, transmission has begun to decline by this point in the season.

What to expect?

The peak of transmission occurred a few weeks ago, and risk is expected to decline at this point (Fig. 1). Risk this week is average when compared to this week in other years, in all of the state's counties (Fig. 2). We expect around 9 counties to report at least one human case this week, down from 10 counties last week.

Recent temperatures have been lower than average for this point in the year, and the state remains far more humid than usual. Long-range forecasts say that both temperature and precipitation are expected to be about average for the region over the next few months, and we expect no surprises from the meteorological influences on mosquito behavior. All indications are that the year will finish up right about average.

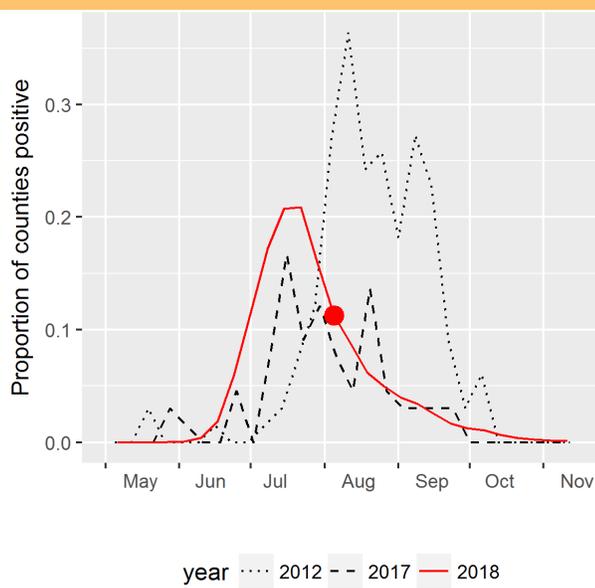


Figure 1: Estimated risk in 2018 with the week beginning 08-05 emphasized by a dot. This year is compared to observations in 2012 and 2017.

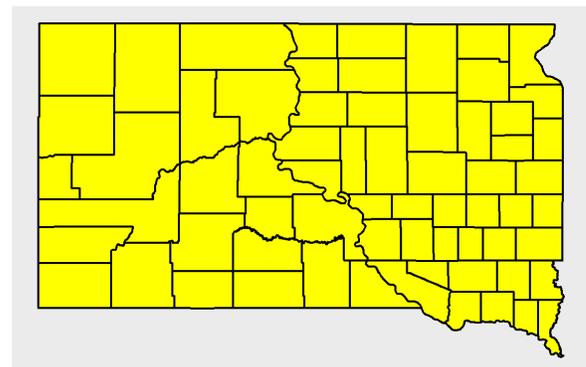
How are the mosquitoes?

With 1520 *Culex tarsalis* pools tested, 52 pools (3.4%) have been positive in 2018. This is an increase from 2.7% last week, and this increase is slightly more than our model predicted for this week (3.0%).

This does not change our model predictions very much. In the beginning of the season, mosquito infections in 2018 looked most like mosquito infections in 2016, a definite outbreak year. Now, however, 2018 has fallen more in line with 2017, an average year.

Current recommendations?

We caution against talking to the public too much about declining risk - about half of 2018's cases are still to occur, and the virus is still spreading among birds and mosquitoes. It would help to publicize current human cases so that the public is aware that WNV is "a thing this year." Spraying will have less of an impact now on cases, but is still recommended before large events, but the burden begins to shift towards personal responsibility as the season draws to a close.



Risk for 2018-08-05 to 08-11

About average

Figure 2: Risk for this week, compared to risk in this county, this week, in the average WNV year.