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(S.D.) - SD officials urge vigilance against West Nile

By: John Thayer Posted at: 04/17/2012 07:04 AM

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - It's been five years since a South Dakotan died from West Nile virus, but health officials are cautioning about a possible resurgence.

Sioux Falls health program coordinator Denise Patton said the type of mosquito that carries West Nile likes dry weather with intermittent rain - the type of weather occurring this spring. She says that could mean more risk.

Patton says the type of mosquito that emerges after flooding like South Dakota saw last spring don't carry the virus.

South Dakota in 2003 led the nation in West Nile deaths per capita. State Epidemiologist Lon Kightlinger says whether there is a resurgence of the virus this year depends on conditions such as the weather. But he's urging communities to continue treating it as a health threat.

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