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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dead Birds Needed by Health Department

The Iroquois County Public Health Department is asking for assistance from the public in the collection of dead birds found in Iroquois county. "Since West Nile virus arrived in Illinois at the end of the summer of 2001, dead birds have been important sentinels for early West Nile virus activity," said Terry Eimen, Director of Environmental Health for the health department. "We are looking for "perching birds" such as crows, blue jays, starlings, robins, cardinals, mockingbirds, catbirds, and grackles. Also many species of sparrows, finches, flycatchers, swallows, warblers and wrens will be accepted for testing."

Mr. Eimen said submitted birds should be believed dead less than 24 hours. Birds should only be submitted if they have not been damaged by scavenging animals and are not decomposed. Birds that have an obvious cause of death such as a gunshot wound or that have been hit by motor vehicles are not eligible for testing. Residents who find dead birds should double bag them in plastic bags (plastic bags that seal are the best) and then take them to the Iroquois County Public Health Department at 1001 East Grant Street in Watseka.

For more information regarding collection of dead birds, contact Iroquois County Public Health Department Environmental Staff at 815-432-2483.
