



**Antelope Valley Mosquito  
& Vector Control District**  
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## NEWS RELEASE

– For Immediate Release

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**March 29, 2007**

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### **About Repos and Mosquitoes**

“What do repos have to do with mosquitoes?” you might ask. Word is out that house repossessions (“repos”) are on their way up in the Valley. The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) points out those repos are very important factors when it comes to mosquito abatement. The reason is that many homes being repossessed have swimming pools and since nobody is maintaining the pool if the house is vacant, the pool can easily turn into an oasis for mosquitoes. A single unkempt pool can produce hundreds of thousands of pesky mosquitoes every day that will search an entire city block for a blood meal from potential humans or animals.

At Tuesday’s AVMVCD Board of Trustee’s meeting Trustee Joyce Axley, a local realtor, told the Board that her company is working on over 100 repos this month alone, and that more are expected to come in. This means it will be a very busy year for the Vector Control Technicians.

“We are asking for the help of residents to notify us about green swimming pools,” District Manager Cei Kratz said. “Since we don’t know what’s going on in the backyards of houses and since we don’t have the resources to check every single property, we rely on neighbors and other agencies to call us with the addresses of bad pools.”

Unkempt swimming pools are one of the greatest challenges in mosquito abatement, since they are practically invisible and, if unchecked, they can produce an unlimited number of potentially disease carrying mosquitoes. Some Vector Control Districts have teamed up with the Police Department to find dirty pools by air using pictures and GPS equipment that can pinpoint the address. This has been very successful joint venture which has probably prevented numerous people from contracting a mosquito-borne disease.

With the unseasonably warm temperatures so early this year, mosquitoes have already started to spread West Nile Virus (WNV) in California. As of March 28, 2007 the virus has been detected in 10 dead birds, 2 sentinel chickens, 2 mosquito samples and one horse in 7 different counties. By this same time last year there were only 10 dead birds from 4 counties affected by WNV.

“We have received our sentinel chickens last week and are putting our mosquito traps out today,” said District Entomologist Karen Mellor. “That signifies the official start of the mosquito season for us. We are already finding places with mosquito larvae, so if it gets warm again, we are going to bring our seasonal technicians on board in the next couple of weeks.”

In addition to green pools residents are also asked to report dead birds, since they can signify WNV activity in an area. Recently deceased birds (except for pigeons, doves and chickens) should be reported to the statewide hotline by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or online at [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov). The dead bird surveillance is an early warning system for the range of the virus even if not all of them are tested. Birds that are not picked up by the end of the day can be safely discarded in the trashcan using gloves, a shovel or an inverted trash bag to handle them.

West Nile Virus is spread by mosquitoes, which feed on the blood of infected birds and then pass it on to humans or other animals. West Nile Virus is not spread by person-to-person contact or by handling dead birds.

For any further questions or services please feel free to contact the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District by phone (661-942-2917) or check us out online at [www.avmosquito.org](http://www.avmosquito.org).

Please call to schedule a photo op.