



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
& Vector Control District**
42624 6th St. East
Lancaster, CA 93535
(661) 942 – 2917
www.avmosquito.org

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

July 13, 2017

Contact:

Cei Kratz – District Manager
Karen Mellor – Entomologist

West Nile Virus Detected in 2 Sentinel Chicken Flocks in the AV

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District was notified that chickens from two of the sentinel flocks have tested positive for West Nile Virus. Five chickens from a flock in West Palmdale near 50th Street West and Avenue N and two chickens at a coop near Division and H-8 in Lancaster have sero-converted, which means their blood shows antibodies to the virus.

“The recent heat has been perfect for mosquitoes to develop quickly and spread the virus,” said District Manager Cei Kratz. “Mosquitoes only take 5 days to develop from egg to adult and standing water turns green in no time.”

The District contracted with an aerial surveillance company to take pictures of the area last month and identified 1000 swimming pools that looked suspicious. The pool teams are currently following up on those and are making sure that property owners either maintain or drain them, to avoid creating mosquito habitats.

The District advises people to remove any stagnant water around the yard, since that’s where mosquitoes will lay eggs and the larvae will hatch. Even small things that can hold water for more than a week is a potential mosquito source, e.g. bird baths, water fountains, small toys or trash bags that are left outside and retain water from sprinklers.

Mosquito control is a shared responsibility of the property owner and the AVMVCD. If both parties do their part to get rid or treat standing water, the entire community will benefit from less mosquitoes and less chances of mosquito-borne diseases, such as West Nile Virus.

As of 7/7/17 the California Department of Public Health has reported that 51 dead birds, 490 mosquito samples, and 2 sentinel chickens (not including these) have tested positive for WNV in California. They have also reported three human cases of West Nile Virus in Los Angeles, Kern, and Kings Counties.

The AVMVCD is also asking for the public's help in tracking down any occurrences of the invasive mosquitoes (*Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*) in the Antelope Valley. These mosquitoes are able to transmit diseases like Zika virus and Dengue fever and have already been found in other areas of Southern California and the Central Valley – as close as the San Fernando Valley. The District urges residents to report mosquitoes that bite during the day, so they can do follow up surveillance and find possible infestations.

To stay up-to-date on new West Nile Virus activity in the Antelope Valley and any mosquito related information check out our website at www.avmosquito.org, Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/avmosquito>), and follow us on Twitter @AVMosquito.

More tips to keep mosquitoes away and stay safe:

- Follow the 3 D's (Drain, Dusk/Dawn, Defend/DEET)
- Check your property for any standing water from sprinklers or showers
- Turn on fans to keep mosquitoes away
- Keep screen doors and windows in good repair and close them
- **Don't** use bug zappers near your patio – they attract more mosquitoes than they kill
- Vaccinate your horses properly.
- Report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.
- Report dead birds by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov.

For any further questions or services please feel free to contact the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District by phone (661-942-2917).