



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Human West Nile Virus Infections Increase to Seven

Lancaster, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health informed the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) that three more human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) have been confirmed in the Antelope Valley. Additionally one of the previously reported “asymptomatic blood donors” has developed symptoms and was reclassified as a West Nile fever case.

“Although all three new cases have reported travel to other areas in California, it cannot be determined if they were infected there or in the Antelope Valley”, District Entomologist Karen Mellor said. “It just reinforces the need to protect yourself from mosquito bites, no matter where you are.”

The AVMVCD was also notified that 9 additional sentinel chickens have tested positive for WNV. This brings the current total for the AV is 4 human cases (2 blood donors and 5 symptomatic cases), 2 birds and 37 sentinel chickens.

So far this year there have been a total of 25 human WNV cases reported in Los Angeles County, 92 cases with four fatalities in California, and 2,636 cases with 118 fatalities nationwide. As of September 12th the California Department of Public Health has also reported 1,163 birds, 2,080 mosquito samples, 276 chickens, 11 horses, and 8 squirrels that have tested positive for WNV in 35 Counties.

Residents are encouraged to continue reporting any dead birds to the California West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov. Not all birds will be tested, but the data of dead bird clusters is vital in tracking and controlling the virus. The AVMVCD recommends following these simple steps to reduce the chances of mosquito bites and WNV infection:

- Follow the 3 D's (Drain, Dusk/Dawn, Defend/DEET)
- Check your property for any standing water from sprinklers or thunder 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

West Nile Virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Although most people that are infected do not show any symptoms, West Nile Virus is a potentially debilitating disease. Even 'mild' cases of West Nile Fever can cause patients enormous pain and discomfort for months.

Also remember to:

- get FREE mosquito-eating fish (*Gambusia affinis*) for fish ponds, pools, and horse troughs.
- 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) or check us out online at www.avmosquito.org. like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/antelopevalley.mosquito) or follow us on Twitter @AVMosquito (<https://twitter.com/AVMosquito>).