



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
& Vector Control District**
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NEWS RELEASE – **For Immediate Release**

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Another Bird Dies of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley

Lancaster, CA – A Northern Mockingbird found near 20th Street West and Avenue I in Lancaster is the latest victim of West Nile Virus (WNV) in the Antelope Valley. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) informed the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) that a dead bird reported by an alert resident tested positive for WNV.

That brings the total number of WNV cases in the Antelope Valley to two dead birds and one positive person. Both dead birds were found in Lancaster, and the WN infected person lives in Palmdale.

“We want to remind everybody to report dead birds to the hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD or online at www.westnile.ca.gov,” District Entomologist Karen Mellor says. “AV residents have to do their part to keep their families and neighbors safe by reducing standing water that supports mosquito larvae.”

As of 9/12/07 Los Angeles County reported a total of 8 human cases, 89 birds, 1 chicken, and 60 mosquito samples that tested positive for West Nile Virus. Most of those cases were located in the San Fernando Valley. Statewide there have been 212 human cases of West Nile Virus with 10 fatalities and it has also been identified in 915 birds, 819 mosquito samples, 231 chickens, 21 horses and 13 squirrels in 49 Counties in California.

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

All residents are urged to take individual responsibility for the protection of their families and animals. Here are a few easy suggestions to reduce mosquitoes in your yard and your neighborhood:

- * Make sure your sprinklers are set in a manner that will allow the ground to dry completely before the next cycle. Conserve water and prevent mosquito breeding.
- * Get rid of standing water – Empty out all small containers at least once a week, keep pools and spas chlorinated or drained, and repair all water leaks.
- * Get FREE mosquito-eating fish (*Gambusia affinis*), if you have sources that cannot be drained (e.g. fish ponds, unused pools, large horse troughs).
- * Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.
- * Wear long sleeved shirts and pants and use mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus when outdoors during dusk and dawn. Always follow instructions on the product label.
- * Report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.

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.