



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

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Activity Continues to Increase in Antelope Valley

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District reports that six of their ten flocks of sentinel chickens have tested positive for West Nile Virus. This week a total of 14 chickens “sero-converted”, which means the blood tests taken from them showed antibodies to the West Nile Virus, indicating that an infected mosquito bit them.

“Chickens don’t actually get sick from the virus, which makes them an ideal early warning system, without hurting them,” said District Manager Cei Kratz. “The increase of positive chickens tells us that there are infectious mosquitoes in the AV and everybody should do their part, to avoid them.”

As of 9/9/15 the California Department of Public Health reports West Nile Virus activity from 40 Counties in 701 dead birds, 2,303 mosquito samples, and 193 sentinel chickens, as well as 108 human cases with 2 fatalities.

Yesterday’s thunderstorm and rain created standing water and puddles that could create mosquito habitat. District officials urge residents to dump and drain standing water on their property to avoid further mosquito problems. They also provide the following tips to avoid getting mosquito bites and West Nile Virus infection:

- Follow the 3 D’s (Drain, Dusk/Dawn, Defend/DEET)
- Check your property for any standing water from sprinklers or thunder showers
- Keep screen doors and windows in good repair and close them

- Turn on fans to keep mosquitoes away
- Don't use bug zappers near your patio – they attract more mosquitoes than they kill

To stay up-to-date on new WNV 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.

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).