



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

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Detected in East Palmdale

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District received confirmation that a mosquito sample from East Palmdale tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The mosquitoes were collected on September 1st near 57th Street East and Avenue R-11. “This marks the first sign of the virus in that area this year,” Karen Mellor, District Entomologist said.

Additionally the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported that one of the person previously considered an asymptomatic blood donor, was reclassified as a West Nile Fever case, and a man in his 80s from Los Angeles developed meningitis due to a WNV infection. That brings the total number of human cases in Los Angeles County to ten (3 asymptomatic, 7 clinical).

A fourth chicken at the flock in West Palmdale near 30th Street East and Avenue N-8 has also tested positive and a chicken from a flock near 20th Street East and Avenue Q in East Palmdale is suspect and will need further testing. This brings the total cases of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley to 9 human cases, 30 birds, 19 sentinel chickens, 5 mosquito samples, and one horse.

The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District would like to extend their thanks to the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster for offering several educational programs for their staff and the communities to make people aware of the dangers and offer solutions on preventing the disease. Both cities have videotaped the presentations and will broadcast them on channels 27 and 28, as well as streaming on their websites, so those who were unable to attend the events will be able to see them in the convenience of their home.

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 is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

As of 9/2/09, 39 Counties in California show WNV activity in 385 dead birds, 744 mosquito samples, 139 sentinel chickens, 26 human cases, 6 tree squirrels and 4 horses.

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.

District officials urge residents to take individual responsibility, and remember the 3 D's protect yourself and your family from West Nile Virus:

- * DRAIN all standing water – Empty out small containers at least once a week, keep pools and spas chlorinated or drained, and repair all water leaks. Conserve water and prevent mosquito breeding.
- * DUSK and DAWN – are peak activity times for mosquitoes.
- * DEFEND yourself - wear long sleeved shirts and pants and use mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 when outdoors during mosquito activity. Always follow instructions on the product label. Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.

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.