



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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First Human Fatality due to West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley

Lancaster, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reports the first human death due to complications from West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley for 2015. The total number of human cases in Los Angeles County to date is 93 with 6 fatalities.

“This death is a tragic reminder of how severe West Nile Virus can be,” said District Manager Cei Kratz. “People need to stay vigilant in protecting themselves and removing potential mosquito breeding sites.”

“Only one in five people who are infected with WNV will have any symptoms of the disease,” said Board member Dr. John Manning. “People with a weakened immune system, or other medical issues are at a higher risk to become sick or die when they are bitten by an infected mosquito.”

Although the mosquito season in the Antelope Valley is winding down residents are still urged to remove standing water, especially after the recent rains, and use insect repellents when outdoors during dusk and dawn.

As of 10/16/15 the California Department of Public Health reports West Nile Virus activity in 40 Counties in 1,170 dead birds, 2,938 mosquito samples, and 362 sentinel chickens, as well as 366 human cases with 18 fatalities. The Antelope Valley is seeing WNV activity in 24 chickens, two mosquito samples and two human cases with one fatality.

District officials 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 (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, unmaintained pools, and horse troughs.
- Vaccinate your horses properly.
- Report dirty 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).