



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

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For Immediate Release

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### **West Nile Virus Keeps Spreading in the Antelope Valley**

Lancaster, CA – Despite cooler temperatures, West Nile Virus (WNV) continues to spread in the Antelope Valley. New reports from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health show an additional two human WNV infections in Lancaster. The new infections include one asymptomatic blood donor in his 50's, and one patient in his 60's who was hospitalized with encephalitis. This brings the total to 12 infections, of which 2 are classified as asymptomatic blood donors.

“This is the highest number of human cases that we have had in the AV since the arrival of West Nile Virus in 2004,” said Cei Kratz, District Manager of the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD). “Last year at this time we had nine human infections. This is a reminder that people have to protect themselves from mosquito bites and get rid of standing water.”

The AVMVCD also reports that five more chickens from three new coops have tested positive for WNV. These chicken coops are located in Quartz Hill and Palmdale. This brings the total in the Antelope Valley to 21 sentinel chickens, 5 mosquito samples, and 4 dead birds.

As of September 27<sup>th</sup> the CA Department of Public Health has reported 176 human cases and 6 fatalities in California. Additionally 1,095 birds, 2,380 mosquito samples, 404 chickens, 10 horses, and 7 tree squirrels from 41 Counties have tested positive for WNV.

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.

To keep mosquitoes away and stay safe, follow these tips:

- 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

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](http://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](http://www.avmosquito.org), like us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/avmosquito>), or follow us on Twitter @AVMosquito.