



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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First Signs of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley This Year

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) received confirmation from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) that 2 chickens from different coops have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). Two additional coops had a couple of chickens each that had inconclusive results and more blood samples were drawn today for confirmation. The positive chickens were found near 40th East and Avenue K in East Lancaster and near 45th West and Avenue N in West Palmdale. The suspect coops are near 30th West and Ave N-8 in West Palmdale and near 40th West and Avenue L-4 in Quartz Hill.

“This is a reminder to all residents that WNV is an endemic virus that continues to threaten public health in the Antelope Valley”, said District Entomologist Karen Mellor. “We advise residents to follow the ‘3 D’s of mosquito control’ - That means **D**rain all standing water, **D**usk and dawn is when mosquitoes are most active, and when we need to **D**efend ourselves by using insect repellent while outdoors.”

The AVMVCD urges the public to conduct routine property inspections for mosquito-breeding sources. Look for any standing water around the house or neighborhood and either remove the water source or contact the District to inspect the potential mosquito-breeding source. Mosquitoes can complete their life cycle in just one week in a water source as small as a bottle cap.

This year the West Nile Virus activity in California has been higher than last year. To date there are 9 human cases, as well as 547 birds, 748 mosquito samples, 30 chickens, and three horses in 27 Counties that have tested positive for WNV.

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 of dead bird clusters is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

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 or follow us on Twitter @AVMosquito.