



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

For Immediate Release

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Those Giant Mosquitoes Everywhere are Actually NOT Mosquitoes

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District has been receiving numerous calls from residents about an invasion of giant mosquitoes.

“This is something we experience every year, some worse than others, and we can assure residents that those are actually not mosquitoes, but rather crane flies”, said District Entomologist Karen Mellor. “Crane flies look similar to mosquitoes, but are quite a bit larger. The good thing is that they don’t bite or cause any diseases. But they can be very annoying, especially in large numbers.”



Weather conditions were just right for a bumper crop of these pesky insects to emerge from the ground. They usually don’t live very long and are anticipated to be gone in a few of weeks. The AVMVCD recommends turning off outdoor lights at night, since insects are attracted to light.

Although these are not mosquitoes, the District advises residents to check their properties for standing water to avoid mosquito breeding. Due to the winter rain and recent high

temperatures mosquito activity has already been detected in some spots, especially unkempt swimming pools.

“We are gearing up for a very busy season. We have some technicians checking hotspots and pools that were dry last year”, Mellor said. “Now is the time for everybody to prepare by cleaning up pools, removing standing water, and vaccinating horses.”

The District’s Board of Trustees decided at the last Board meeting to end the Africanized Honey Bee program in order to shift the focus to invasive mosquito species that are capable of transmitting diseases like Zika virus, Dengue fever and Yellow fever. The AVMVCD recommends that people who encounter bees on their property contact a beekeeper (www.avbeekeepers.com) or a licensed pest control operator for help.

The invasive mosquitoes (*Aedes aegypti*) have already been found in other areas of Southern California and the Central Valley – as close as the San Fernando Valley. The District urges residents to report mosquitoes that bite during the day, so they can do follow up surveillance and find possible infestations.

To stay up-to-date on new West Nile Virus 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.

More tips to keep mosquitoes away and stay safe:

- Follow the 3 D’s (Drain, Dusk/Dawn, Defend/DEET)
- Check your property for any standing water from sprinklers or 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
- 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).