



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

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For Immediate Release

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**Contact:**

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### **Old Mosquito-borne Virus Reappears in the Antelope Valley**

Lancaster, CA – A blood sample taken from a sentinel chicken in Palmdale has tested positive for Saint Louis Encephalitis (SLE). The coop is located near 30<sup>th</sup> Street West and Avenue N-8 in Palmdale. This is the first time in nearly 30 years that SLE has been detected in the AV. In August of 1989 a 65 year old man in the Antelope Valley was diagnosed with the virus.

SLE is a mosquito-borne virus that is very similar to West Nile Virus, as it is transmitted by the same mosquito species and that most people will not develop symptoms. Shortly after the introduction of West Nile Virus (WNV) to California in 2003, SLE was rarely detected. It reappeared in California in the Coachella Valley last year. So far this year SLE has been confirmed in one person, four sentinel chickens and 176 mosquito samples in California.

“This is another reminder that we need to be vigilant in our fight against mosquitoes and the diseases that they can spread,” said District Manager Cei Kratz. “Even with colder temperatures it’s still important to keep pools maintained or dry, remove standing water, and wear mosquito repellents at dusk and dawn.”

The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District also reports three additional chickens have tested positive for WNV in two coops. These coops are located near Division and Avenue H-8 in Lancaster and 50<sup>th</sup> Street West and Avenue N in Palmdale.

This brings the total for WNV in the AV to 19 sentinel chickens, two dead birds and one mosquito sample.

The California Department of Public Health reports West Nile Virus activity from 38 Counties in 1,322 dead birds, 3,438 mosquito samples, 323 sentinel chickens, as well as 327 human cases with 11 fatalities.

District officials urge residents to follow these tips to avoid getting mosquito:

- Follow the 3 D's (Drain, Dusk/Dawn, Defend/DEET)
- Keep swimming pools maintained or completely dry
- Check your property for any standing water from sprinklers
- 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 house – 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](http://www.avmosquito.org), Facebook page (<https://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.

For any further questions or services please feel free to contact the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District by phone (661-942-2917).