



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

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For Immediate Release

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**Contact:**

Cei Kratz – District Manager  
Karen Mellor – Entomologist

### **Another Human Case of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley**

Lancaster, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has informed the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) that another Antelope Valley resident has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV).

The patient is an elderly woman who was hospitalized with encephalitis in mid September. She has had a travel history to the Central Coast, but does not recall any mosquito bites.

The California Department of Public Health has also reported that several of the District’s sentinel chickens in Lancaster have tested positive for WNV. Six chickens from a flock near 15<sup>th</sup> Street West and Avenue I, four chickens from a flock near 40<sup>th</sup> Street East and Avenue J, and one from a flock near Division and Avenue H-8 have been infected with WNV. Currently the total number of WNV cases in the Antelope Valley stands at 11 chickens, 3 human cases, 3 birds, and 1 mosquito sample.

“Although the weather is getting cooler at night, we still have a least a month of mosquito activity ahead of us,” District Entomologist Karen Mellor said. “Therefore it is important to stay vigilant about protecting yourself against mosquito bites by using repellents when outside and keeping mosquitoes out of your home.” Residents are also urged to clean or drain their pools, and get rid of any standing water to reduce mosquito populations.

Throughout California 45 Counties show WNV activity in 2,232 dead birds, 1,805 mosquito samples, 421 chickens, 21 horses and 25 squirrels. So far this year 295 people have tested positive for WNV, six of those were fatalities. At the same time, in Los Angeles County, 101 people, 402

dead birds, 457 mosquito samples, 87 chickens, and 9 tree squirrels have been confirmed positive for 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. District officials urge residents to take individual responsibility for the protection of their families and animals. Here are a few easy suggestions to reduce mosquitoes in your yard and your neighborhood:

- \* Get rid of standing water – Empty out all small containers at least once a week, keep pools and spas chlorinated or drained, and repair all water leaks.
- \* Get FREE mosquito-eating fish (*Gambusia affinis*) if you have sources that cannot be drained (e.g. fish ponds, pools, large horse troughs).
- \* Make sure your sprinklers are set in a manner that will allow the ground to dry completely before the next cycle. Conserve water and prevent mosquito breeding.
- \* Wear long sleeved shirts and pants and use mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 when outdoors during dusk and dawn. Always follow instructions on the product label.
- \* Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.
- \* Horse owners should make sure their horses are properly vaccinated.
- \* Report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.

The public is asked to help with West Nile Virus surveillance and control efforts by reporting dead birds by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or online at [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov). Birds that are not picked up by the end of the day can be safely discarded in the trashcan using gloves, a shovel or an inverted trash bag to handle them.

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).