



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

For Immediate Release

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Labor Day Marks the End of Summer – Not the End of Mosquito Season

Lancaster, CA – Labor Day is considered the official end of summer, which means the fair is over, all the kids will go back to school, and families and friends get together for a traditional BBQ and pool party, or a camping and fishing trip. Either way, people will be spending time outside into the night while having a good time together.

Unfortunately this does not mean the mosquito season is over, too. “August and September are usually the peak months for the transmission of mosquito-borne diseases, such as West Nile Virus,” says Karen Mellor, Entomologist of the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District. “And mosquitoes will be around through October, if the weather stays warm.”

The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) reminds residents to be vigilant to keep mosquitoes at bay by following the ‘3 D’s of mosquito control’ - **D**rain, **D**usk and dawn, and **D**efend. That means people need to check their property for standing water and drain it, use insect repellent when outdoors during dusk and dawn, and make sure their screens on doors and windows fit properly.

The Antelope Valley has been lucky so far this year and has only found two dead birds that were categorized as “chronic” infections. That indicates that they survived an infection in the past, but does not imply current virus activity in the area. As of today West Nile Virus has been found in 24 Counties in 1,028 mosquito samples, 302 birds, 79 sentinel chickens, 20 human cases, and one horse and squirrel.

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.