



**Antelope Valley Mosquito  
& Vector Control District**  
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[www.avmosquito.org](http://www.avmosquito.org)

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

**April 6, 2015**

**Contact:**

Cei Kratz – District Manager  
Karen Mellor – Entomologist

### **Large Numbers of Giant Mosquitoes Invade the Antelope Valley**

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

“After investigating the situation, we found that they actually were 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 couple 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 recent high temperatures mosquito activity has already been detected in some spots.

“We are gearing up for a busy season. We are picking up our sentinel chickens tomorrow and are starting our disease surveillance”, Mellor said. “Now is the time for everybody to prepare by cleaning up swimming pools, removing standing water, and vaccinating horses.”

As of 4/3/15 the California Department of Public Health reports West Nile Virus activity from 3 Counties in 4 dead birds, and one mosquito sample. Last year the Antelope Valley recorded WNV in two people, 5 dead birds, 4 mosquito samples, and 29 sentinel chickens.

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.

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 thunder 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

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](http://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).