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FOUR MORE GROUPS OF MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

– Combination of hot weather and infected mosquitoes raises risk–

CONCORD, CALIFORNIA - - Four additional groups of mosquitoes tested positive for West Nile virus last week bringing the total in Contra Costa County to seven so far this year. Two groups were trapped in Pittsburg near Railroad Avenue and East Leland Road; one group was trapped in Bay Point near San Marco Boulevard and California Delta Highway 4; and one group was trapped in Pinole near Tennent Avenue and San Pablo Avenue.

“The combination of hot weather and infected mosquitoes creates a heightened risk to people,” said Deborah Bass, spokeswoman for the District. “Wearing mosquito repellent while outdoors is very important. It only takes one bite from an infected mosquito to possibly contract West Nile virus.”

The District is asking residents to please continue to report dead birds to the hotline since those reports are crucial to their surveillance and control efforts.

Since the arrival of West Nile virus in Contra Costa County in 2004, 27 people have been documented with the disease and two have died. Most people who are bitten by a mosquito with WNV will not get sick; however, up to 20 percent of the population infected with WNV will get West Nile fever. West Nile fever causes people to experience mild to severe flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, body ache and possible paralysis. Less than one percent of infected individuals will require hospitalization. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems are most susceptible to illness and death caused by WNV.

Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

- **DEFEND** yourself against mosquitoes by using a repellent with an effective active ingredient such as DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Make sure to follow label directions.
- **DRAIN** all sources of standing water that may support mosquito-breeding habitats. Residential sources can be a big producer of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County.
- **DOOR** and window screens should fit tight and be in good repair. This will prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

- DO vaccinate your horses. Horses are highly susceptible to West Nile virus – approximately half of the horses that get WNV die or have to be euthanized
- DAWN and DUSK are times to avoid being outdoor since this is when mosquitoes are most active.
- DRESS appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors and mosquitoes are present.
- DEAD birds should be reported to the California Department of Public Health’s Dead Bird Hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or on their Web site <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>. Not all birds will be picked up and tested, but reporting dead birds provides crucial information for mosquito control efforts.

People wishing to be notified about adult mosquito fogging or spraying have several options. They may visit the District’s Web site at www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us and opt to receive the notifications automatically by email, they can view information on the District Web site, or they may phone the District for a recorded message at (925) 771-6195.

Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District is located at 155 Mason Circle in Concord. Call the District to report mosquito problems at (925) 771-6195, or visit their office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get FREE mosquitofish for ornamental ponds or horse troughs.

For information concerning human West Nile virus symptoms, prevention, or testing, please call the Contra Costa Health Services department at (888) 959-9911 or visit their website at www.ccpublichealth.org. Human West Nile virus cases can be found at http://www.cchealth.org/topics/west_nile/cases.php

For information concerning West Nile virus and horses, please visit the California Department of Food and Agriculture Animal Health Branch at www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/wnv_info.htm or call them at (916) 654-1447.

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