



San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Are You Neglecting Your Pool? WE'RE LOOKING FOR YOU!

West Covina, CA (May 12, 2011) –

Just seven days into the District's annual helicopter surveillance program, the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control reports a 52% increase in the number of neglected swimming pools spotted from the air compared to last year's record numbers.

"We're finding nearly 23 stagnant swimming pools per hour compared with just 13 pools per hour in 2010" said Steve West, General Manager of the District. After just 9 flight hours, the District has spotted 211 green, algae-filled pools from San Gabriel Valley communities.

"This is a problem that requires immediate attention" notes West. State law prohibits anyone from harboring conditions conducive to mosquito breeding on their property. Under the California Health & Safety Code, property owners can be liable for penalties up to \$1,000 per day plus the cost of abatement if these sites are not corrected.

Pasadena Police Lieutenant Michael Ingram reports, "Last year, the District's helicopter surveillance program identified 528 neglected pools in the San Gabriel Valley, the highest number since the program's inception in 2005."

Algae-filled swimming pools and spas serve as breeding sites for disease-transmitting mosquitoes. The District reported the first indication of West Nile virus (WNV) this year in a dead bird collected Tuesday from the City of West Covina.

Since its introduction in 2003, 611 people have been sickened by WNV and 18 have died in Los Angeles County alone.

Proactive monitoring, early season mosquito control, and public education are critical to reduce disease transmission. "This is a community issue that requires community support" says West.

Throughout the summer, basic protective measures should be followed:

- **DUMP AND DRAIN:** Check properties weekly and remove all sources of standing water. Report 'green' inoperable pools or other sources of standing water to the District
- **DAWN AND DUSK:** Avoid outdoor activity in the early mornings and for two hours after dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- **DEFEND:** Wear effective repellents when outdoors during these times, and ensure doors and windows are properly screened to keep mosquitoes out.

The District encourages the public to help identify WNV "hot spots" by reporting dead birds to the **WNV Hotline at (877) WNV-BIRD** (877-968-2473) or online at **www.westnile.ca.gov**. We also urge our residents to **call the District to report mosquito activity**.

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District is a public health agency dedicated to the control of mosquito and other vector-borne diseases.

The District can be reached at 626-814-9466 or on the web at www.sgvmosquito.org

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