



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Cases still on the Rise

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District reports another human case of West Nile Virus (WNV), as well as more chickens and dead birds that tested positive for the virus in the Antelope Valley. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported that a man in her 50s became ill with fever, headache, blurry vision and a rash in late July and was subsequently diagnosed with meningitis due to WNV infection. He is currently recovering, but still has some lingering symptoms like weakness and aches.

The birds were found near 20th West and Avenue M-8 in Palmdale, and near 10th West and Ave J-8, as well as 30th East and Ave K-8 in Lancaster. Three sentinel chickens from a coop near 40th Street East and Avenue J and one near 50th Street West and Avenue M were confirmed to be positive, too. The District is still waiting for results of chickens and mosquito samples from West Palmdale. This brings the total cases of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley to 5 human cases, 3 mosquito samples, 14 sentinel chickens and 27 birds.

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 is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

As of 8/19/09, 35 Counties in California show WNV activity in 329 dead birds, 504 mosquito samples, 56 chickens, 10 human cases, 3 horses and 3 tree squirrels.

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.