



San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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West Covina, CA (February 16, 2007) – Antibodies to West Nile virus (WNV) have been detected in a sentinel chicken in the City of Monterey Park in the vicinity of Garvey Ranch Park. The chicken was one of a flock maintained by the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District as part of their vector-borne disease surveillance system.

A blood sample from the chicken tested positive January 31st in the District's laboratory and was sent to the California Department of Health Services Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory (VRDL) for confirmation. We received notice of confirmation today.

Inspections in the immediate and surrounding areas yielded minimal mosquito activity. "Even when mosquito populations are low, WNV activity occurs in the winter months" said Kenn Fujioka, the District's Assistant Manager, "this emphasizes the message that WNV is a year-round concern in Southern California."

West Nile virus has also been detected locally this year in a crow from the City of Northridge and in mosquitoes from Rowland Heights. Steve West, District Manager stated, "We are working closely with other mosquito and vector control districts in Los Angeles County. It is only through such concerted efforts across this region that WNV activity can be detected and minimized."

Last year, California recorded 276 cases of WNV infection in humans. In Los Angeles County, there were 13 confirmed cases. "It is critical that residents remain diligent. Avoiding mosquitoes and eliminating standing water year-round is very important," noted West.

West Nile virus is a community issue. Residents can help by keeping their pools clean, reporting standing water to their local district, and keeping an eye out for dead birds which are often an early indicator of WNV activity in an area. Dead birds should be reported by the calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or at www.westnile.ca.gov.

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District is a non-profit 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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