



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**CONTACT:**

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**DATE: May 03, 2006**

## **Mosquito Fighters and Police Helicopters in the Air Again**

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District and the Foothill Air Support Team (FAST) are again joining forces to locate mosquito-breeding sources of standing water in the San Gabriel Valley in an early season attack on West Nile virus.

Helicopters will take to the air beginning May 4<sup>th</sup> in search of "green" algae-filled swimming pools that pose a tremendous risk to public health. In urban areas, improperly maintained swimming pools are a major source of mosquitoes capable of spreading West Nile and other mosquito-transmitted viruses.

The Pasadena Police Department provides regional helicopter air support in the cities of Alhambra, Arcadia, Azusa, Covina, Glendora, Monrovia, San Marino, South Pasadena and West Covina in what is known as the Foothill Air Support Team (FAST). FAST will use high tech Global Positioning Systems (GPS) coupled with the Los Angeles County Tax Assessors Geographical Information System to identify green pools. Mosquito control personnel will team up with the flight crews to identify and photograph dirty pools and will follow-up with residents at identified locations to eliminate these conditions.

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Improperly maintained pools/spas that breed mosquitoes violate both local and State health and safety codes leaving property owners liable for stiff penalties if these sites are not corrected.

A similar exercise last year identified over 100 dirty pools in six surveyed cities. This year, the District, in coordination with FAST will survey all 23 cities and county areas within the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District's jurisdiction.

**WHAT: Press Conference – Lift off immediately following**

**WHEN: Thursday - May 4, 2006 - 10:00 AM**

**WHY:** Although most residents maintain their pools properly, a single green pool can produce tens of thousands of mosquitoes. Finding these pools is a critical step to reduce the incidence of human illness this year.

**WHO:** **Frank Wills**, Chief of Police, West Covina Police Department  
Chair – Board of Governors – Foothill Air Support Team

**Steve West**, District Manager, San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

**Wayne Hiltz**, Deputy Chief, Pasadena Police Department, Air Operations

**WHERE:** Pasadena Police Department Heliport  
2175 Yucca Lane  
Altadena, CA 91001

**VISUALS:** Staging area for lift off of the Police Department's Bell Jet Helicopters; GPS equipment used for surveillance; Vector Control Personnel will be on board to identify and photograph problematic sites and report to District ground units for follow-up inspections.

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