



**San Gabriel Valley Mosquito &
Vector Control District**

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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West Covina, CA (March 8, 2007) – A second indication in nearly as many weeks that West Nile virus (WNV) is active in the San Gabriel Valley has been identified. A dead crow reported by a local citizen in the City of El Monte was tested Thursday by the Los Angeles County Public Health Veterinary Services and confirmed to have been infected with the virus.

A low level of WNV activity has been detected recently in several Southern California areas and this is beginning to make some officials nervous. “It’s not unusual to see activity this early in the season, but when we see it this widespread coupled with the warmer evenings we’ve been having, it definitely increases our level of concern” said Kenn Fujioka, the District’s Assistant Manager. West Nile virus begins to replicate in mosquitoes when the average temperatures rise above 58°F. “We’ve been measuring mean nighttime temperatures above 58°F all this week,” Fujioka adds, “if this continues, it may indeed be a bad year for WNV.”

While the lack of rain this winter may keep mosquito populations down a bit, it tends to concentrate both wild bird populations and mosquitoes into areas where water is found thereby actually increasing transmission risks. This phenomenon has been identified in the closely related St. Louis encephalitis virus transmission cycle during prior La Niña, or drought years. Steve West, District Manager for the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District cautions residents, “We haven’t had much rain, but even the few inches we’ve had thus far is enough to create breeding sites in our own backyards. We need everyone to go out this weekend and check your yards for standing water and dump it out.” Steve West encourages residents to call and report problem areas, get mosquitofish for ponds, and request our help when needed.

As this report indicates, dead bird reports are important to local districts. Multiple reports from an area help point to potential problem areas or WNV 'hot spots.' "While we can't test all birds, the reports are very valuable to us and we ask the public to help us track and control WNV" notes West. Reports can be made to the California West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov.

This is the first indication of WNV this year in El Monte and although the District cannot tell where the bird was infected, Technicians will nonetheless thoroughly canvas the area hunting for and eliminating mosquito breeding sites.

Remembering the 3 Ds will help residents stay safe:

1. **DRAIN:** Monitor your property weekly and dump out standing water. Properly maintain pools and spas (buckets, unused "green" swimming pools, and trash cans are notorious mosquito breeders). Ensure faucets and sprinklers are not leaking and avoid over-watering.
2. **DUSK/DAWN:** Avoid outside activity at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
3. **DEET:** If outdoors during peak hours, use a repellent containing the ingredient DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Be sure to follow label directions for maximum effectiveness.

Call the District if you are having mosquito problems. There is no fee for this service. 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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