



San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Detected in the San Gabriel Valley

West Covina, CA (July 23, 2009) – The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District has received the first confirmation of West Nile virus (WNV) activity in the San Gabriel Valley this year. Two dead birds collected and tested by the Los Angeles County Veterinary Public Health on July 20 were positive for WNV infection. The birds were collected from the cities of La Verne and La Puente.

Many birds are highly susceptible to WNV infection and reports of dead birds in the community are often the first sign that the virus is being transmitted by mosquitoes. Residents are encouraged to continue reporting dead birds to the State's WNV Hotline at (877) 968-2473 or online at www.westnile.ca.gov. While all birds might not be collected and tested, the reports are analyzed by the California Department of Public Health to identify problem areas. These reports help mosquito control officers find and address issues early and can save lives.

This year, 218 birds, 168 mosquito samples, and 10 sentinel chickens have tested positive across the State for WNV however no human cases have been reported. West Nile virus has been detected in multiple cities in Los Angeles County indicating widespread activity again this year.

Residents throughout the County must take precautions now to break the mosquito lifecycle and prevent bites and infection with WNV:

- Check properties and remove all sources of standing water to kill immature mosquitoes and eliminate places female mosquitoes use to lay eggs.
- Report inoperable pools or other sources of standing water to the District. One algae-filled pool can breed thousands of mosquitoes per week and affect properties for blocks around.

- Use effective repellents if outdoors when mosquitoes are present (between dusk and dawn)
- Ensure doors and windows are properly screened to keep mosquitoes outside.

All residents, regardless of their age or health, can get sick from WNV. Those over 50 years of age or with compromised immune systems are at higher risk of developing the more severe form of the illness which can be fatal. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) notes that almost 29,000 people have been reported with WNV disease since 1999. Of those, 11,760 have been serious and over 1,100 have died. Research continues to show that even the 'milder' forms of the disease can cause significant illness which lasts for weeks. West Nile virus must not be taken lightly.

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District is a public health special district 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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