

San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Mosquito populations exploding early due to hot, dry winter

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Vector control specialists at the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District are responding to an abnormally high volume of mosquito calls. Disease surveillance teams are concerned about finding larger than normal mosquito populations so early in the year.

Although most Southern Californians enjoy the balmy winter weather, the heat and lack of rain creates a perfect environment for mosquitoes. A typical winter in Los Angeles gives vector control agencies a break from the dangerous pests because the cooler temperatures slow down their development. However, this winter is unusual. The average daytime temperature, so far, in February is about 80 degrees and mosquitoes are already out in full force.

“We are about a month ahead of our typical mosquito season. Our specialists are finding mosquitoes in sites that usually are not active until late March or even April.” says Jason Farned, Public Information Officer for the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District. The District attributes this population boom to not only the recent heat but also the lack of rain. Farned explains, “Mosquitoes need sources of standing water to develop. In a typical winter, rain washes away debris so fewer sources are created. With so little rain this year small pockets of water are trapped by debris in storm drains and gutters. The recent storm dropped enough precipitation to fill empty swimming pools and all of these factors create a perfect habitat for mosquitoes.”

The early emergence of large numbers of mosquitoes is a big concern for the District for a many reasons. Large populations of mosquitoes increase the likelihood that West Nile virus will be transmitted. Another concern is acceleration in the expansion of invasive species like Asian tiger mosquitoes.

The District has adjusted its operations to meet this accelerated timeline and is asking all residents to immediately eliminate all sources of standing water (no matter how small) where mosquitoes might grow and protect themselves from mosquito bites. Here are some tips to follow:

- Examine property regularly to identify, DUMP, or DRAIN standing water
- Call and REPORT mosquito activity, especially when mosquitoes bite during the day
- Call and REPORT green pools and standing water around neighborhood
- Wear insect REPELLENT and LONG SLEEVES to prevent bites
- Keep screens tightly closed on windows and doors

Report mosquitoes and/or request service by call San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at (626) 814-9466 or by visiting www.SGVMosquito.org