

Multi-Agency Information Release

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Vector Control Urges Residents to Help Thwart Invasive Mosquitoes

The presence of invasive mosquitoes increases new viral threats in Los Angeles County

San Gabriel Valley, CA – May 15, 2015

For the fourth year in a row, two Los Angeles County vector control districts are tackling potentially dangerous, invasive mosquitoes and the public health agencies are asking residents for help.

The Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District (GLACVCD) and the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (SGVMVCD) have been working together since 2011 to control these invasive mosquitoes.

Three recent mosquito introductions now impact Los Angeles County residents - the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*), yellow fever mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*) and Australian backyard mosquito (*Aedes notoscriptus*). These mosquitoes have been found in and around San Gabriel Valley. They are excellent at colonizing new areas and vector control officials warn that these invasive *Aedes* could be anywhere in the county.

The Asian tiger mosquito currently poses a larger threat compared to the other two invasive mosquitoes since it is the most pervasive in L.A. County. Discovered in 2011, there are now 15 communities experiencing Asian tiger mosquito infestations – up from three communities since the beginning of 2014.

Much of the fight against these six-legged invaders occurs in the backyard.

Invasive *Aedes* are able to lay eggs on the walls of small containers, including buckets, plant saucers, and even in recyclables that can hold standing water. Their ability to adapt to urban environments makes these mosquitoes extremely difficult to control in cities around the world.

The presence of invasive *Aedes* increases the risk of residents being exposed to tropical diseases such as dengue, chikungunya, and yellow fever. These viruses are currently not transmitting locally.

“It’s not a matter of if, but when,” says Susanne Kluh, Scientific-Technical Services director for GLACVCD. “It takes just one traveler infected with chikungunya or dengue fever to be bitten by the invasive mosquitoes in L.A. County to start local transmission.”

Vector control officials actively monitor and control invasive species wherever they are found through grassroots door-to-door inspections, source reduction, mosquito control, and education

programs. Year-round population monitoring yields crucial data necessary to determine the best control options.

“Our focus is to suppress populations of these mosquitoes wherever they are detected and to limit their expansion into surrounding cities,” says Dr. Wakoli Wekesa, Scientific Programs Manager at SGVMVCD. “It’s critical we utilize all the tools and resources available to us – from traditional management techniques to the latest, environmentally-friendly technology – to combat this urban threat.”

Vector control is calling upon all residents to do their part by following these steps:

- REPORT any sightings of small, black-and-white mosquitoes, or if you are being bitten by mosquitoes during the day! Residents can contact SGVMVCD at 626-814-9466 or GLACVCD at 562-944-9656 or online at www.ReportMosquitoes.org.
- Dump and drain all water around your home. Eliminate plant saucers and other unnecessary containers and thoroughly scrub outdoor pet water dishes weekly to remove eggs.
- Do not transport or share plant stems rooted in water. Do not keep outdoor buckets full of water.
- Use insect repellent containing CDC-approved active ingredients, such as DEET, Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus, to avoid bites.

For more information please visit the districts’ websites at www.glacvcd.org and www.sgvmosquito.org

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