



Invasive Mosquito Species Pose Growing Health Threat to California

Invasive mosquito species pose a significant health threat to California and its residents. The establishment of certain invasive mosquitoes has increased the risk of local transmission of imported diseases and has created a severe public health nuisance in some communities. Two invasive mosquito species, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, have been found in many Southern and Central California communities (nearly 200 cities in 12 counties) and continue to spread throughout the region. These species are capable of transmitting viruses that are dangerous to people such as chikungunya, dengue, and Zika.

There are significant public health concerns associated with the characteristics and behaviors of these invasive mosquitoes, including:

- They bite aggressively during the day and evening hours and are found in urban and suburban communities creating a severe public nuisance.
- They breed in a variety of containers and underground water sources on private properties which complicates detection and prevention.
- They do not respond to traditional control and surveillance methods, requiring the use of new equipment and personnel-heavy control operations.
- They increase the risk of local disease transmission of imported diseases.

With millions of international travelers arriving or returning to California each year and the spread of these invasive mosquito species across California, the potential for local transmission of imported diseases is increasing. All it will take is one invasive mosquito biting one infected traveler for these diseases to potentially spread to others here at home.

MOSQUITO RESEARCH FUNDING

Vector control agencies have been working closely with public health agencies and mosquito control product manufacturers to expand the toolbox of mosquito surveillance and control strategies, but they need your help. California has historically provided funding for mosquito research, but that eroded in 2008 due to the state's budget crisis. Without state investment, vector control agencies will not be able to effectively protect public health. Harnessing new research and cutting edge surveillance will improve the state's ability to identify emerging threats and prevent mosquito-borne illness. The MVCAC encourages the state to reinvest in mosquito research with a dedicated funding stream.