



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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West Nile Virus Cases still on the Rise

Lancaster, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported four more human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in the Antelope Valley. Two male blood donors (in their 20s and 40s) as well as a man in his 50s and a woman in her 40s were infected with WNV in Lancaster. That brings the total number of human cases in Los Angeles County to nine (4 asymptomatic, 5 symptomatic), all of which are located in Lancaster.

Additionally one mosquito sample collected near Avenue I and Challenger Way, and three birds in Lancaster, as well as three sentinel chickens and a horse in West Palmdale tested positive for the virus. This brings the total cases of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley to 9 human cases, 30 birds, 18 sentinel chickens, 4 mosquito samples, and one horse.

The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District has teamed up with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the DEET Education Program and the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster to offer educational programs that are free for the community to attend. The presentations will be on September 1st in Palmdale and on September 2nd in Lancaster.

Residents are encouraged to continue reporting any dead birds to the California West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov. Not all birds will be tested, but the data is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

As of 8/28/09, 36 Counties in California show WNV activity in 354 dead birds, 649 mosquito samples, 98 sentinel chickens, 19 human cases, 4 horses and 4 tree squirrels.

West Nile Virus is transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito. Although most people that are infected do not show any symptoms, West Nile Virus is a potentially debilitating disease. Even 'mild' cases of West Nile Fever can cause patients enormous pain and discomfort for months.

District officials urge residents to take individual responsibility, and remember the 3 D's protect yourself and your family from West Nile Virus:

- * DRAIN all standing water – Empty out small containers at least once a week, keep pools and spas chlorinated or drained, and repair all water leaks. Conserve water and prevent mosquito breeding.
- * DUSK and DAWN – are peak activity times for mosquitoes.
- * DEFEND yourself - wear long sleeved shirts and pants and use mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 when outdoors during mosquito activity. Always follow instructions on the product label. Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.

Also remember to:

- * get FREE mosquito-eating fish (*Gambusia affinis*) for fish ponds, pools, and horse troughs.
- * vaccinate your horses properly.
- * report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.
- * report dead birds by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov.

For any further questions or services please feel free to contact the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District by phone (661-942-2917) or check us out online at www.avmosquito.org.