



**Antelope Valley Mosquito  
& Vector Control District**  
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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

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### **First West Nile Virus Fatality in Los Angeles County**

Lancaster, CA – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported the first fatality due to West Nile Virus (WNV) in Los Angeles County. Additionally they updated the number of human infections to 18 in Los Angeles County, 6 of which were blood donors with no symptoms of WNV. The number of infections in the Antelope Valley rose to 12, with four blood donors and eight people that had symptoms ranging from fever and body aches to meningitis and encephalitis.

The patient who passed away was a man in his 80s from Los Angeles. He had an extensive travel history to Mexico and was most likely exposed to the virus while there.

The newly reported cases in the Antelope Valley were a man in his 50s with neurological symptoms, and a man with West Nile fever in his 60s, who are residents of Lancaster. The other one was a man from Palmdale in his 50s, who had no symptoms, but was identified as being infected with WNV after donating blood. This is the first time this year that West Nile Virus has been identified in a Palmdale resident.

The total cases of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley are 12 human cases, 30 birds, 26 sentinel chickens, 5 mosquito samples, and one horse. As of 9/30/09, 41 Counties in California show WNV activity in 61 human cases with 3 fatalities, 1,008 mosquito samples, 457 dead birds, 306 sentinel chickens, 11 horses, and 9 tree squirrels.

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](http://www.westnile.ca.gov). Not all birds will be tested, but the data is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

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](http://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](http://www.avmosquito.org).