



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

For Immediate Release

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Don't Invite Mosquitoes to your BBQ

Lancaster, CA – Memorial Day weekend usually kicks off the summer with backyard BBQs and leisure time spent outside. And although we've had our weather ups and downs lately, it seems that Mother Nature will cooperate this weekend so we can enjoy Memorial Day outside with good food and friends. But beware of uninvited guests, namely mosquitoes.

The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District recommends that residents need to be vigilant to keep mosquitoes at bay, even though they have not seen any evidence of West Nile Virus in the area this year. "We advise residents to follow the '3 D's of mosquito control' - **D**rain, **D**usk and dawn, and **D**efend", said District Entomologist Karen Mellor. "That means people need to check their property for standing water and drain it, make sure their screens on doors and windows fit properly, and that they use insect repellent when they are outdoors during dusk and dawn."

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends using repellents that contain DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. These are proven to be effective and safe if used according to the directions.

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 of dead bird clusters is vital in tracking and controlling the virus.

As of today West Nile Virus has been found in 4 Counties in 6 birds and a mosquito sample. Last year at this time, 7 Counties showed signs of the virus in 12 birds, 38 mosquito samples, and 3 chickens.

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.