



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Birds, Chickens and Mosquitoes – WNV Transmission is Increasing

Lancaster, CA – The California Department of Health Services reported that 5 more birds and 3 chickens tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). Additionally, one mosquito sample also tested positive for the virus for the first time this year. Those results and the increase in dead bird reports to the State Hotline have caused the Statewide West Nile virus (WNV) DYCAST surveillance system to extend the “High Risk” areas of Lancaster.

The birds were found between 10th West and 30th West and Avenues L and I in Lancaster. Two of the chickens were from the coop near 15th W & Ave I that already had a positive chicken, the other one was from a coop near Division and Avenue H-8. The mosquito sample was caught at vacant house near 27th West and Avenue K. There was also a report of the first positive bird found in Acton.

“We want to stress again, that it is of utmost importance for all residents of the AV to take precautions against mosquitoes,” District Manager Cei Kratz said. “These findings are reminders that WNV transmission is occurring here and that people have to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing by preventing mosquito bites using effective repellents, and wearing long sleeves and pants and getting rid of standing water around their yards.”

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.

So far this year 25 Counties in California show WNV activity in 139 dead birds, 120 mosquito samples, 11 chickens and one tree squirrel. To date in the Antelope Valley 10 birds, 4 chickens, one mosquito sample, and one person tested positive for the virus. At this time last year there were 268

birds, 86 mosquito samples, 4 chickens, 3 people, and one horse from 21 Counties reported to be positive for WNV.

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. 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.