



**Antelope Valley Mosquito
& Vector Control District**
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NEWS RELEASE – **For Immediate Release**

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More West Nile Virus is Found in the Antelope Valley

Lancaster, CA – The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) informed the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) that two more dead birds and one sentinel chicken in the area tested positive for WNV. A Common Raven was found near 60th Street West and Avenue N and a Cactus Wren was found near 20th Street West and Avenue O in Palmdale. The positive chicken was from a coop near 15th Street West and Avenue I in Lancaster.

That brings the total number of WNV cases in the Antelope Valley to four dead birds, one chicken and one positive person. The District was also asked to submit additional blood samples from two more chickens from two other locations in East Lancaster for confirmation tests.

“Although it is getting cooler, the mosquito season is not quite over, yet,” District Entomologist Karen Mellor says. “The rain last weekend filled up some previously empty pools and they might turn into mosquito habitat if nothing is done about it. Residents should make sure to drain their unused pools or other containers that collected water. Swimming pools that are no longer in use due to the colder temperatures should still be maintained or completely drained.”

As of 9/21/07 Los Angeles County reported a total of 21 human cases, 115 birds, 10 chicken, and 76 mosquito samples that tested positive for West Nile Virus. Most of those cases were located in the San Fernando Valley. Statewide there have been 257 human cases of West Nile Virus with 14 fatalities and it has also been identified in 1070 birds, 918 mosquito samples, 330 chickens, 22 horses and 15 squirrels in 50 Counties in California.

West Nile Virus is spread by mosquitoes, which feed on the blood of infected birds and then pass it to humans or other animals. West Nile Virus is not spread by person-to-person contact or by

handling dead birds. Dead birds should be reported to the State hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD or online at www.westnile.ca.gov. Birds that are not picked up by the end of the day can be safely discarded in the trashcan using gloves, a shovel or an inverted trash bag to handle them.

All residents are urged to take individual responsibility for the protection of their families and animals. Here are a few easy suggestions to reduce mosquitoes in your yard and your neighborhood:

- * Make sure your sprinklers are set in a manner that will allow the ground to dry completely before the next cycle. Conserve water and prevent mosquito breeding.
- * Get rid of standing water – Empty out all small containers at least once a week, keep pools and spas chlorinated or drained, and repair all water leaks.
- * Get FREE mosquito-eating fish (*Gambusia affinis*), if you have sources that cannot be drained (e.g. fish ponds, unused pools, large horse troughs).
- * Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.
- * Wear long sleeved shirts and pants and use mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus when outdoors during dusk and dawn. Always follow instructions on the product label.
- * Report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.

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.