



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

– **For Immediate Release**

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First Human Case of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District (AVMVCD) has been notified by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health of the first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) who resides within the Antelope Valley.

In late July a young male from Palmdale was identified as an asymptomatic blood donor with WNV when his blood donation went through routine screening by the American Red Cross laboratory. Asymptomatic blood donors are not included in the weekly State of California human WNV case count (www.westnile.ca.gov). To date 17 positive blood donors have been identified in the State.

Since then, this individual has developed symptoms consistent with West Nile Fever and therefore has been re-classified as a WNV Fever case. “This is the first time we have ever had a person infected with WNV in the Antelope Valley,” says District Manager Cei Kratz.

In California, WNV has already affected 49 Counties, where it has been detected in 832 dead birds, 761 mosquito samples, 189 chickens, 19 horses and 185 humans, and has resulted in 10 fatalities. So far in Los Angeles County, 55 mosquito samples, 68 dead birds, one chicken, as well as 6 humans have been confirmed positive for the virus. One person has also died from the WNV infection.

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 for the protection of their families and animals. Here are a few easy suggestions to reduce mosquitoes in your yard and your neighborhood:

- * 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, pools, large horse troughs).
- * 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.
- * 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.
- * Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.
- * Horse owners should make sure their horses are properly vaccinated.
- * Report stagnant pools and other backyard sources to the AVMVCD.

The public is asked to help with West Nile Virus surveillance and control efforts by reporting dead birds by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) 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.

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.