

**Mosquitoes Continue
to Threaten California!!!**

FIGHT the Bite!

**Aerial applications of
mosquito larvicide
throughout the county**

New Threat!



Contact the County Vector Control Program

(858) 694-2888 | vector@sdcounty.ca.gov

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Public is Urged to Prevent, Protect and Report

Mosquitoes are small and most often seen as little more than a nuisance – but they are much more dangerous than that. West Nile virus (WNV), a disease transmitted through bites from infected mosquitoes, caused the death of nine Californians in 2011 alone, more than any other state in the U.S. It is the most prevalent mosquito-borne disease in the country. There were a total of 712 cases and 43 deaths nationwide last year.

There is no cure or vaccine for WNV. Symptoms of WNV typically develop within three to 14 days of a bite from an infected mosquito. The vast majority of human cases exhibit little to no symptoms of the disease – only 20 percent of those who contract the virus show flu-like symptoms such as fever, fatigue and muscle soreness. However, for individuals with weak immune systems, particularly the young and elderly, the disease can trigger life-threatening conditions such as encephalitis (the inflammation of the brain), which causes high fever, disorientation, convulsions and even death.

Risk of WNV contraction is highest during dawn to dusk; therefore, precautions should be taken to avoid mosquito bites if you spend extended periods of time outside.



For information about West Nile virus and how to protect yourself, call 858-694-2888 or visit:

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Aerial applications of mosquito larvicide throughout the county

For the last two years, San Diego County mosquito-control programs have included larvicide drops on local waterways and working with Sheriff's officials to find and treat neglected, "green" swimming pools that can become mosquito-breeding grounds.

Female mosquitoes can lay up to 200 eggs at a time in the still water found in wetlands. These eggs hatch into larvae which feed on organic material. Larvicides are made from bacteria that are specific to mosquito larvae and will not harm other wildlife. This results in the efficient elimination of larvae before they can develop into biting adults.

The County of San Diego Vector Control Program contractor applies mosquito larvicide by helicopter to wetlands in an effort to reduce mosquito populations and the risk of mosquito-borne diseases, including West Nile Virus (WNV).

August 8TH was the fifth aerial drop of mosquito larvicide for the 2012 mosquito breeding season. Mosquito populations are monitored and tested for the presence of West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases throughout the county during the mosquito season. Applications have been conducted at four week intervals or as needed.

Controlling the mosquito population is essential in preventing the spread of West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases.

To grow to adulthood and bite the young mosquitoes, or larvae, need water. All they need is 1/2 inch of water, so getting of containers that hold water around homes, yards, schools and businesses is key. The public must help by turning over and emptying anything that has potential to hold water such as buckets, toys, clogged rain gutters, old tires, plant saucers, pots, and pet dishes.

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New Threat

The Asian Tiger Mosquito was recently identified in an El Monte neighborhood. This aggressive day-biting mosquito is not native to California and has not been seen in the San Gabriel Valley since 2001, when they were accidentally imported in shipments of "Lucky Bamboo" plants.

This mosquito



- is very small (approx. ¼ inch), with distinctive black and white bands on its thorax, abdomen, and legs. They are aggressive biters and are active during daylight hours as well as dusk and dawn.

- is a container breeder and prefers to lay its eggs onto the inside of water-filled containers or on stems of aquatic plants. When flooded, the eggs hatch and larvae emerge, maturing to biting adults in 7-12 days.

- is a native of tropical and subtropical Southeast Asia but has invaded other countries through international transport and travel. When established, they become a significant pest and are able to transmit many serious diseases including dengue, yellow fever, chikungunya, encephalitis-causing viruses and the parasite responsible for heartworm in dogs and cats.

The Asian Tiger Mosquitoes are responsible for recent outbreaks of dengue virus in Florida, Hawai'i, and Texas. If this mosquito becomes permanently established in California, residents will have to live with an even greater risk of mosquito-transmitted diseases.

To protect yourself from WNV and other mosquito borne diseases:

- Report mosquito breeding areas
- Report dead birds, particularly crows, hawks and jays to be tested for WNV
- Report green swimming pools and other standing water. You can report anonymously and the County will treat the pool for mosquitoes free of charge
- Dump and drain all standing water around your home
- Discard or put away any containers, cans, buckets and old tires around the home
- Use a mosquito repellent from dusk to dawn
- Wear long sleeves and long pants outside from dusk to dawn

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Mosquitoes Continue to Threaten California

A dramatic upswing in West Nile virus human cases is reported nationwide. More serious illnesses from West Nile virus have been reported this year. The increased cases we are seeing are a strong reminder that West Nile Virus is a serious disease, and a confirmation of how bad it can be. West Nile Virus is severe, and can potentially be fatal to the most vulnerable in our population. The Health Department is warning residents of how dangerous it is, and urging all to take the necessary precautions.

The first human case and the first death in California were both in Kern County. The first human case was a woman of 70 years old who was hospitalized and released, and the first fatality was an 88 yr-old woman, but people of all ages can become sick. A 6-year-old Stanislaus girl sickened with the West Nile virus was the third case in California this year. The young girl first presented symptoms on July 6 with weakness in her right arm, difficulty speaking, and the inability to walk, according to the Stanislaus County Health Services Agency.

The West Nile Virus is still a dangerous threat not only in California, but throughout the United States. As of August 10th, California alone has had 648 dead birds, and 1136 mosquito pools in 32 counties that have tested positive for WNV, and 10 counties with 26 human cases. Of the 26 human cases, 9 had neuro-invasive illness. Nationwide, the number of deaths continues to grow, especially in the most affected states which are Arizona, Mississippi, and Texas, where the West Nile Virus West has already been declared an emergency.

Although the infection rate for West Nile Virus West reaches its peak during the months of August and September, and we still cannot tell if it could worsen, but the figures do not yet suggest that the situation can improve.

Parents are advised to have their children and teenagers wear protective clothing and use insect repellents when outdoors in the morning or early evening, when mosquitoes are most active. Environmental Health officials urge the public to help protect itself by remembering and acting upon the phrase: "Prevent, Protect, Report."



Prevent Mosquito Breeding:

Backyard water sources are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Residents should dump or remove anything that can hold water, such as plant saucers, rain gutters, buckets, trash cans, children's toys, old spare tires and wheelbarrows. Mosquito fish may be used to control mosquito breeding in backyard water sources such as unused swimming pools, ponds, fountains and horse troughs. You can get free mosquito fish from the Vector Control Program, 858-694-2888.

Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites:

Protect yourself from the virus by staying inside when mosquitoes are most active, between dusk and dawn, and by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors. Use insect repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus or IR 3535 when you are outdoors. Make sure window and door screens are in good condition and are secured.

Report dead birds and green swimming pools:

Please report green swimming pools to the Vector Control Program for treatment. The County provides free mosquito fish to control mosquitoes in backyard water sources including green swimming pools. Also report dead crows, ravens, jays, hawks, and owls to be tested for the virus. Contact the County at 858-694-2888.

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First Human Case with West Nile Virus in San Diego

West Nile Virus (WNV) has been spreading rapidly across the United States. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is warning the public to take steps to protect themselves. Meanwhile, California announced the first reported fatality from West Nile virus, health officials in San Diego County confirmed the first human case. A 19 year-old Escondido man who didn't report any symptoms; however, the virus was detected during a routine screening test of blood he donated in late July. The man did not recall any mosquito bites in the 30 days prior to donating blood and said he did not travel out of the county during this period.

HHS and the County's Department of Environmental Health Vector Control are inspecting the man's home and surrounding areas for potential mosquito breeding locations, and setting up traps.

"This year, this is an indication that the West Nile virus is here. It's important for the public to know West Nile virus is a dangerous and potentially deadly disease," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H, County Public Health Officer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned that more cases of WNV have been diagnosed so far this season than at any time since 2004. The normal "season" for WNV is August and September.

People of all ages can become sick, and of those individuals who become infected with WNV, 80 percent will have no symptoms. Most of those who do fall ill have a mild illness of headache, fever, nausea, fatigue, skin rash or swollen glands. Severe illness can develop and sometimes the illness can be life threatening. The risk of complications increases for those over age 50, and people with weakened immune systems.

If you think you have symptoms consistent with WNV, contact your healthcare provider.

For information about West Nile virus call 858-694-2888 or visit:

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Get the latest West Nile Virus updates via mobile telephone by texting the word PEST to the number 75309 on your cell phone.



**Get the Facts and
Join the Fight!**

FIGHT the Bite!



**Protect Yourself, Your Family and Your
Neighborhood From Mosquitoes**



To receive community health alerts on your smartphone,
download a QR reader application to your phone
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