



Warm Weather Means More

Mosquitoes

Now is the time to Prevent West Nile Virus!

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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO CONTROL VECTOR PROGRAM

Now that Spring has arrived, so have hungry mosquitoes. Lawns and gardens may look a bit thirsty, but residents should be careful not to over water say County Vector Control officials. Just a ½ inch of standing water is all it takes for mosquitoes to breed. Residents should protect themselves and their water bills by not over watering.

A record-setting 35 human WNV cases were reported in the county last year. One of those victims was Retired County of San Diego Public Information Officer, Bill Polick. The 62-year-old was doing yard work one day, and woke up the next day with a rash from head to toe. He quickly developed severe flu-like symptoms and landed in the Emergency Room. Although he doesn't remember most of his hospital stay, doctors diagnosed Polick with WNV. Since there is no treatment, Polick recuperated slowly after losing 30 pounds. Months later he still suffers from memory loss, fatigue and muscle weakness.

"I thought I had done everything I could to protect myself – made sure I didn't have standing water around my property, kept my pool clean. But I still got the virus, and trust me, you do not want this to happen to you," warns Polick.

"Mr. Polick's experience illustrates why we continue to issue warnings about West Nile virus," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "The public needs to know that it is a serious risk, and they must protect themselves. The best defense against West Nile virus is to avoid mosquito bites. Take the time to check your yard and ensure your door and window screens are in good repair and fit tight.

Take a few minutes every week to protect yourself and your family from mosquitoes:

- Eliminate stagnant water on your property.
- Fix leaky outdoor faucets.
- Keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated.
- Drain anything that can hold water for more than five days, such as buckets, birdbaths, clogged rain gutters, old tires, plant saucers, pet dishes, and children's toys.
- Repair window and door screens so mosquitoes cannot get indoors.
- Add mosquito-eating fish to unused stagnant swimming pools, ornamental ponds and horse water troughs. Mosquito-fish are available for free from VectorControl and several nurseries and pet stores around the county.

Avoid going outdoors at dawn and dusk, or wear long pants and long-sleeved, light-colored shirts. Apply insect repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 to exposed skin.

To report dead birds, neglected swimming pools and mosquito breeding sites, call County Vector Control at (888) 551-INFO (4636). A prevention checklist can be found on Vector Control's Web site:

..... www.SDFightthebite.com

