



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

For Immediate Release

September 17th, 2021 **Contact:**
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Invasive Aedes Mosquito Detected in a New Area of West Lancaster, CA

Lancaster, CA – The Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District has detected a sample of an invasive mosquito in West Lancaster. The sample was collected near 32nd Street West and Avenue J-4 in Lancaster. The District has detected this invasive mosquito in other areas of town during the 2021 season, but this is the first detection in West Lancaster during the 2021 season. District entomologist, Karen Mellor, identified this sample as *Aedes aegypti*, also known as the Yellow Fever mosquito. Mellor states, “This type of mosquito was first discovered in the Antelope Valley in October of 2018, but we have detected it several more times every season since then.”

Aedes aegypti is a small black and white mosquito that is closely associated with human dwellings. Unlike our native *Culex* mosquitoes that generally bite during dusk and dawn and tend to be less aggressive, *Aedes* mosquitoes will actively pursue people, throughout the entire day and into the evening.

Invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes feed almost exclusively on humans, biting aggressively all day long. Female mosquitoes will lay eggs in small containers, just above the water

line. The eggs can dry up and survive for six or more months, waiting for the container to re-flood so they can hatch. This detection of Aedes mosquitoes was discovered in a collection of plants that were being propagated in standing water. Be sure to rinse and scrub containers that plants are in at least weekly to dislodge and kill any mosquito eggs or immature mosquitoes, even if the containers are inside the home. Due to Aedes' close association with humans, they will not hesitate to take up residence inside your home or office.

Aedes aegypti have the potential to carry very different diseases than our native Culex mosquitoes and are known transmitters of diseases like Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, and Zika virus. "Although these mosquitoes have the potential to carry these diseases, there is currently no local transmission occurring," said District Manager Leann Verdick. "Keeping mosquito populations low remains of utmost importance due to the potential for these diseases to make their way into the mosquito population," states Verdick.

AVMVCD personnel have increased mosquito surveillance in these areas and will continue to place traps that are designed to attract egg-laying Aedes mosquitoes. Once trapped, the mosquitoes are contaminated with larvicide. When they leave the trap, they spread larvicide to several breeding sites around the trap which targets larvae in small and hard to find breeding sources. The adult mosquito also gets infected with a mosquito-specific fungus that kills her. In addition to increased surveillance efforts, residents in the surrounding area will be informed about the proximity of this invasive mosquito and will be advised to do their part to eliminate this mosquito.

The public plays a critical role in helping to control the spread of this mosquito population. All possible sources of standing water where mosquitoes lay eggs such as buckets, tires, and plant saucers should be emptied of standing water. Scrubbing the insides of the containers is also recommended, as this can dislodge eggs deposited above the water line. The District also urges residents to do their part to protect themselves from mosquito bites by following these recommendations:

- Wear EPA registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label).

- Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, socks and shoes when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure window and door screens are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- Inspect yards for standing water sources and drain water that may have collected under potted plants, in bird baths, discarded tires, and any other items that could collect water.
- Check your rain gutters and lawn drains to make sure they aren't holding water and debris.
- Clean and scrub bird baths and pet watering dishes weekly.
- Check indoor plants that are kept in standing water for mosquito activity (i.e. Bamboo and Philodendron)

Report any day-time biting mosquitoes to the AVMVCD at 661-942-2917

To stay up-to-date on any mosquito related information check out our website at www.avmosquito.org, Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/avmosquito>), and follow us on Twitter and Instagram @AVMosquito.

For any further questions or services please feel free to contact the Antelope Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District by phone (661-942-2917).

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