



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

For Immediate Release

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First Human Cases of West Nile Virus in the Antelope Valley for the 2020 Mosquito Season

West Nile virus is endemic in the Antelope Valley and the Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District continues to urge residents to take precautions against mosquito bites!

LANCASTER – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) has identified the first two cases of human West Nile virus (WNV) infections in the Antelope Valley for the 2020 season. “Although the Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District identifies the presence of West Nile virus every year in some form, this is the time of year when potential human transmission is at the peak”, states District entomologist, Karen Mellor.

West Nile virus continues to be a serious health threat to residents in the Antelope Valley. We encourage residents to get rid of items that can hold water and breed mosquitoes both inside and outside the home. This act of eliminating breeding sources around the home is important now more than ever as residents spend a majority of their time at home. We are currently in peak mosquito season in Los Angeles County and residents are also urged to protect themselves from mosquito-borne illnesses by using EPA-registered mosquito repellent products.

Humans get WNV through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most mosquitoes do not carry the virus; therefore, most people bitten by a mosquito are not exposed to WNV. Those who do get WNV may experience mild symptoms including fever, muscle aches, and tiredness. In some cases, especially in persons over 50 years of age and those with chronic medical conditions such as cancer and diabetes, severe WNV infection can occur and affect the brain and spinal cord causing meningitis, encephalitis, paralysis and even death. There is no specific treatment for WNV disease and no vaccine to prevent infection.

Stagnant swimming pools or “green pools” should be reported to the Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at (661) 942-2917.

Dead birds may be reported by calling (877) 968-2473 or online: westnile.ca.gov/report.php

Decrease your risk of exposure to West Nile virus:

1. PROTECT YOURSELF: Mosquito repellents can keep mosquitoes from biting you. EPA-registered repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and oil of lemon eucalyptus are the longest lasting and most effective. They are available as sprays, wipes, and lotions. Consider wearing long-sleeved clothes and pants when outside.
2. MOSQUITO PROOF YOUR HOME: Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.
3. REDUCE MOSQUITOES: Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water.
 - Check for items that hold water inside and outside your home once a week
 - Cover water storage containers such as buckets and rain barrels. If no lid is available, use wire mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito
 - Dump out standing water in flowerpots, saucers, birdbaths and other containers at least weekly
 - Clean and maintain swimming pools, spas and drain water from pool covers
 - Throw away old items in your patio or yard that can hold water, e.g., old car tires and children’s toys

More information and resources:

- West Nile virus in LA County: publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/VectorWestNile.htm
- West Nile virus in California: westnile.ca.gov
- Health education materials on mosquito control and preventing West Nile virus infections: www.socalmosquito.org

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