



## NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:**  
July 12, 2006

**Contact:** Deborah Bass  
Public Affairs Manager  
(925) 685-9301, ext. 112  
(925) 260-4670 cell  
[dbass@ccmvcd.net](mailto:dbass@ccmvcd.net)  
[www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us](http://www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us)

### **SECOND DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

*-District reports second positive case of West Nile virus in 2006-*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - - A dead scrub jay found in Lafayette has tested positive for West Nile virus, the second positive West Nile virus case in Contra Costa County in 2006.

“ We rely on the public to report dead birds to the state West Nile virus hotline because those reports help us respond to potential virus hot spots in the county and reduce possible human infection,” said Dr. Steve Schutz, scientific programs manager for the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District. “The public should report dead birds immediately since birds that are dead over 24 hours are not viable specimens; however, even if the bird is dead for more than a day or is not picked up for testing, the reports themselves provide crucial information for our control efforts in protecting public health.”

Last year in Contra Costa County there were 11 human cases, 94 dead birds, 18 chickens, four mosquito samples\*, ten horses, and 25 squirrels that tested positive for West Nile virus. So far in California this year, there has been one human case, 64 dead birds, seven chickens and 36 mosquito samples that have tested positive for the virus.

Most people who are bitten by a mosquito with WNV will not get sick; however, up to 20 percent of the population infected with WNV will get West Nile fever. West Nile fever causes people to experience mild to severe flu-like symptoms such as fever, headache, body ache and possible paralysis. Less than one percent of infected individuals will require hospitalization. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems are most susceptible to illness and death caused by WNV.

Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

**DEFEND** yourself against mosquitoes by using a repellent with an effective active ingredient such as DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Make sure to follow label directions.

**DRAIN** all sources of standing water that may support mosquito-breeding habitats. Residential sources are the biggest producer of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County.

Page 2 - **SECOND DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

DOOR and window screens should fit tight and be in good repair. This will prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

DO vaccinate your horses. Horses are highly susceptible to West Nile virus – approximately half of the horses that get WNV die or are euthanized.

DAWN and DUSK are times to avoid being outdoor since this is when mosquitoes are most active.

DRESS appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors and mosquitoes are present.

DEAD birds should be reported to 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473). Not all birds will be picked up and tested, but reporting dead birds provides important information for mosquito control efforts.

To learn if the District is spraying for adult mosquitoes in your neighborhood in Contra Costa County, please visit the district's website at [www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us](http://www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us) or call (925) 685-9301 for a recorded message.

Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District is located at 155 Mason Circle in Concord. Call the District to report mosquito problems at (925) 685-9301, or visit their office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get FREE mosquitofish for ornamental ponds or horse troughs.

To report dead birds or to learn of your local mosquito control district, call the California Department of Health Services at 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or visit [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).

For information concerning West Nile virus symptoms, prevention, or testing, please call the Contra Costa Health Services department at (888) 959-9911 or visit their website at [www.ccpublichealth.org](http://www.ccpublichealth.org)

For information concerning West Nile virus and horses, please visit the California Department of Food and Agriculture Animal Health Branch at [www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/wnv\\_info.htm](http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/wnv_info.htm) or call them at (916) 654-1447.

\* Mosquito samples: Mosquitoes are trapped, collected from the field, and then the females are pooled together by species. Each pool contains one to 50 mosquitoes. Each sample is tested for the presence of St. Louis encephalitis, Western Equine encephalomyelitis and West Nile viruses.