



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MORE DEAD BIRDS FOUND POSITIVE WITH WEST NILE VIRUS IN DANVILLE AREA**

*--Possibility of higher risk indicates need for mosquito repellent and residential source checking--*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - The Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District (the District) received confirmation late yesterday that two dead birds found in Alamo and Danville have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). A total of eight dead birds have been confirmed with WNV in Contra Costa County this year, including these two birds. The first bird, a sparrow, was found near Stone Valley Road and Roundhill Road in Alamo. The second bird, a robin, was found near Stone Valley Road and Green Valley Road in Danville. There have been no human or horse cases to date in Contra Costa County.

“So far this year, we have identified three birds in the Danville area that have tested positive for West Nile virus,” said Dr. Steve Schutz, scientific programs manager for the District. “This indicates that there may be a higher risk of contracting the disease in this area. Residents should be diligent about wearing mosquito repellent and also checking their yards to ensure they are not breeding mosquitoes”.

West Nile virus is one of a group of disease-causing viruses spread by mosquitoes. It first appeared in the United States in 1999. The virus is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected with WNV when they feed on infected birds.

According to the California Department of Health Services, there have been 31 human infections, including two deaths, due to West Nile virus in California so far this year.

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.

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes or contracting WNV, residents are urged to take the following precautions:

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- 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 breeder of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County.
- DOOR and window screens should fit tight and be in good repair. This will prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- DAWN and DUSK are times to avoid 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.

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 our office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get mosquitofish. Visit our website [www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us](http://www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us) for more information or to learn about possible mosquito spraying in your area.

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)