



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
August 29, 2005

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SECOND PERSON TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

-- District also reports six sentinel chickens and eleven more birds test positive for the virus--

CONCORD, CALIFORNIA - - The Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District received confirmation of the second human West Nile virus case in the county this year. The person is a resident of east Contra Costa County and is reported to have had the milder form of the disease, West Nile fever. In addition, eleven more birds and six sentinel chickens have tested positive for West Nile virus. The birds were found in Concord (3), Pleasant Hill, Danville, Clayton, Brentwood, Palm Tract (north of Discovery Bay), Orinda, and Walnut Creek (2). The chickens are located in Knightsen, Oakley, and Martinez.

“I can’t emphasize enough the need for the public to apply mosquito repellent when outdoors, especially at dusk and dawn,” said Deborah Bass, public affairs manager for the District. “Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus are proven to be the most effective”.

To date in Contra Costa County there have been a total of two humans, 38 birds, six chickens, three mosquito samples, five horses, and one squirrel that have tested positive for West Nile virus. In California, there have been eight West Nile virus-related fatalities and 370 people diagnosed with the disease 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.

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

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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 about possible mosquito spraying in Contra Costa County, visit the district's website at 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.

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

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 or call them at (916) 654-1447.

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