



NEWS RELEASE

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

MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY --RISK TO PEOPLE INCREASES--

-District reports first evidence of mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus for 2007-

CONCORD, CALIFORNIA - - Four samples of mosquitoes have tested positive for West Nile virus in Contra Costa County. One sample of mosquitoes was from Antioch and three samples were from Oakley.

“The significance of finding positive West Nile virus mosquitoes is that people can contract the disease when they are bitten by an infected mosquito,” said Deborah Bass, spokesperson for the District. “While we will increase our control efforts in these areas, we continue to ask the public to ensure that they are not producing mosquitoes in their yards, which are often the biggest source of mosquitoes. And of course, to wear mosquito repellent when outdoors.”

The vast majority of the District’s resources are focused on eliminating mosquitoes in their larval form; however, as a result of the heightened risk to people due to finding infected adult mosquitoes, District officials are preparing for possible adult mosquito fogging or spraying in focused neighborhoods during the latter part of this week, weather permitting.

The District recently introduced an automatic email notification for people wishing to learn about adult mosquito fogging or spraying in the county. Anyone can visit the District’s website at www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us and opt to receive the notifications automatically. Earlier this year, the Contra Costa County sheriff’s department announced that they discontinued their telephone notification calls for District adult mosquito spray operations since their reevaluation indicated that it did not meet their emergency criteria.

The District offers several ways in which people can learn about adult mosquito spray operations. Residents can visit the District website and view the information, opt in for the email notifications, or simply phone the District for a recorded message at (925) 685-9301.

Last year in Contra Costa County, eight people were documented with West Nile virus and two people died. To date in 2007, there have been twelve birds that have tested positive for West Nile virus.

In California this year, five people have died of the virus and a total of 64 people infected.

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Residents are urged to take the following precautions:

1. **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.
2. **DRAIN** all sources of standing water that may support mosquito-breeding habitats. Residential sources can be big producers of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County.

To learn if the District is spraying for adult mosquitoes in Contra Costa County, please visit the district's website at www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us or call the District at (925) 685-9301 for a recorded message. **Adult mosquito spray notifications by email are also available** by signing up on the website.

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.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/wnv_info.htm or call them at (916) 654-1447.

To report dead birds or squirrels or learn about West Nile virus cases and activity in California, visit the California Department of Public Health's website at www.westnile.ca.gov