



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN ANTIOCH**

*-Virus-positive mosquitoes and heat wave increase risk-*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - - A group of mosquitoes collected on July 2 in Antioch near the Contra Loma Reservoir has tested positive for West Nile virus, the second infected group of mosquitoes documented in Contra Costa County this year. Last month there was one group of virus-positive mosquitoes trapped in Holland Tract, as well as infected dead birds found in Alamo and Antioch.

“Over the past several weeks, our surveillance system has indicated that a portion of Antioch is at a higher risk of West Nile virus transmission,” said Deborah Bass, public affairs manager with the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District. “Our technicians continue to put forth great effort in locating and treating mosquitoes that may transmit the virus to people and animals in this area.”

The current heat wave is expected to increase the risk of West Nile virus transmission since higher temperatures help mosquitoes develop through their life cycle quicker and also increase the rate of replication of the virus in their salivary glands.

“We are urging property owners to routinely check their yards and dump mosquito water sources and to properly maintain their water features,” said Bass. “Especially swimming pools, which can produce hundreds of thousands of mosquitoes and affect residents up to a five-mile radius.”

Since the arrival of West Nile virus in Contra Costa County in 2004, 22 people have been documented with the disease and two have died. This year in California three people have been documented with the virus so far, as well as 268 dead birds, 86 samples of mosquitoes, four sentinel chickens and one horse.

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.

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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 can be a big 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.

**DO** vaccinate your horses. Horses are highly susceptible to West Nile virus – approximately half of the horses that get WNV die or have to be 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) or [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).

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 Contra Costa County, please visit the district's website at [www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us](http://www.ccmvcd.dst.ca.us) or call the District at (925) 771-6195 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) 771-6195, 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 human 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.