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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MOSQUITOFISH FOR BACKYARD PONDS AND SWIMMING POOLS NOW AVAILABLE IN ANTIOCH**

*-Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control announces new location for mosquitofish pick-up-*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - - The City of Antioch is now hosting a second location for distribution of free mosquitofish given to the public in Contra Costa County for use in backyard water sources to combat mosquitoes. The City of Antioch is working in collaboration with the Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District.

“We applaud City of Antioch officials in collaborating with us to set up this distribution point in the eastern portion of the county,” said Craig Downs, general manager with the Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District. “We are working together to ensure that our residents have easy access to these fish that can protect their health.”

Mosquitofish or *Gambusia affinis*, a type of guppy, can be put in horse troughs, ornamental ponds, and abandoned or neglected swimming pools. “Green” swimming pools as they are often referred to, have become a great concern to District officials since these pools tend to produce mosquitoes that can transmit West Nile virus, a debilitating and potentially deadly disease. One unmaintained swimming pool can produce hundreds of thousands of mosquitoes and affect residents up to a five-mile radius. About 100 mosquitofish are recommended for an average-sized neglected swimming pool.

Properly maintained pools that are chlorinated and have filtration will not produce mosquitoes. For owners wishing to drain their swimming pools, officials recommend homeowners contact their local wastewater treatment authority to properly dispose of the water. Officials also advise homeowners to consult their pool technician since some pools may become damaged if allowed to dry out. And if there are mosquitoes present, draining the water into the street, gutter, or storm drain simply spreads the mosquitoes underground throughout the community and makes them difficult, if not impossible, to control.

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Every year, the Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District produces about a million fish a year to aid in mosquito control. Used throughout the world, the fish are a natural, biological way to control mosquitoes. They are very efficient, too. Each fish can eat up to 500 mosquito larvae every day.

Homeowners are only allowed by law to place the mosquitofish in water sources on their property and not in any waterway, even if it passes through their yard. The District follows strict guidelines set by the California Department of Fish and Game. Only trained and licensed personnel, such as District technicians, can put mosquitofish in areas outside of residential properties.

Contra Costa Mosquito & Vector Control District, a public health agency, 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 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to get FREE mosquitofish for ornamental ponds, horse troughs, swimming pools or other potential mosquito sources.

**New Location Added: Mosquitofish are now available at Antioch Corporation Yard, 1201 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Antioch, CA, Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

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