



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **WEST NILE VIRUS SEASON OFFICIAL WITH TWO POSITIVE DEAD BIRDS IN OAKLEY AND LAFAYETTE**

*-District reports first positive cases of West Nile virus in 2007-*

**CONCORD, CALIFORNIA** - - Two dead birds, one found in Oakley and the other in Lafayette, have tested positive for West Nile virus, the first positive West Nile virus cases in Contra Costa County this year.

“It’s no surprise that West Nile virus activity is starting as the recent warmer weather kick starts the season,” said Deborah Bass, spokeswoman for the District. “Every resident should be checking their yards for mosquito breeding that occurs in almost any quantity of water and dumping it out. They should do this not only for themselves and their family, but their neighbors as well. We all count on each other to do our part and reduce the risk of getting this disease.”

Last year in Contra Costa County eight people were documented with West Nile virus and two people died. There were also 92 dead birds, 24 chickens, 20 mosquito samples (groups of mosquitoes), one horse, and 19 squirrels that tested positive for West Nile virus. So far in California this year, there has been one human case, 58 dead birds, two chickens, 33 mosquito samples, and two horses that have tested positive for the virus.

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 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.

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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 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) 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](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.