



# Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 12, 2012

### **FOUR SENTINEL CHICKENS TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS**

*Positive test results also found in two mosquito samples in Coachella Valley*

**INDIO, CA, OCTOBER 12, 2012:** More positive test results for West Nile Virus (WNV) were confirmed in the Coachella Valley for sentinel chickens and mosquitoes in Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage, and in unincorporated Riverside County, one site north of I-10 and the other west of the Salton Sea.

The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District received confirmation from the California Department of Public Health, Richmond Campus that four (4) sentinel chickens tested positive for WNV. Three (3) of the positive chickens were from coops located near 81st Ave. & Highway 86 by the west shore of the Salton Sea. The fourth chicken was from a coop near 18th Ave. and Bubbling Wells Rd. just outside of Desert Hot Springs. This brings the total number of WNV-positive chickens in the Coachella Valley this year to 50. Blood samples for all chickens were taken October 1<sup>st</sup>.

The District also received two (2) WNV-positive results in mosquito samples in the upper valley, one from Palm Desert and one from Rancho Mirage. This is the fourth positive sample from Rancho Mirage and the fourth from Palm Desert this year. This brings the total number of WNV-positive mosquito samples to 112 for the Coachella Valley in 2012. Mosquito samples were taken October 4<sup>th</sup>.

The District continues extensive surveillance, prevention, and treatment programs throughout the Coachella Valley and urges residents to help reduce mosquito breeding sources by inspecting their backyards and neighborhoods for standing water sources at least once a week.

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**Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:**

- Avoid outdoor activity at dusk and dawn.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.
- Report swimming pools and ornamental ponds that are not being maintained. Keep ornamental ponds and neglected pools free of excess vegetation.
- Contact the District for free mosquitofish to place in your ornamental pools, neglected pools or any other container with standing water that can potentially breed mosquitoes.
- Contact the District if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work.

Contact the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at 760-342-8287 or 1-888-343-9399 to report mosquito problems, request mosquito fish, and report neglected pools or standing water. You can visit us online at [www.cvmvcd.org](http://www.cvmvcd.org) to obtain more information and submit service requests.

**Background:** WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Not all species of mosquitoes are capable of transmitting the virus. Of those that can transmit the virus only a small percentage are actually infected with the virus. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have only mild symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. However, young children, the elderly, or individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing more severe symptoms when infected. WNV causes illness and death every year, however many cases are never tested and confirmed by physicians.

**~END~**