



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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WEST NILE VIRUS MOVES INTO PALM SPRINGS

One mosquito sample in Palm Springs and 11 near the north and west shores of the Salton Sea test positive for West Nile virus

INDIO, CA, AUGUST 5, 2013: West Nile virus (WNV) has made its way to the northwest end of the Coachella Valley. For the first time this year, a sample of mosquitoes from Palm Springs tested positive for WNV. This sample contained 41 mosquitoes and was from a trap near the corner of East Vista Chino and North Palm Canyon Drive. Mosquito samples from 11 other traps in areas around the north and middle shores of the Salton Sea also tested positive, bringing the total number of WNV-positive mosquito samples in the Coachella Valley this year to 14. Two sentinel chickens tested positive for the virus early last month in the Mecca area. For the latest WNV statistics for all of California, please visit <http://westnile.ca.gov>.

“We are fortunate that we haven’t had any people test positive for West Nile virus in the Coachella Valley so far this year, but the virus is now on both sides of the Valley and everyone needs to be extra cautious,” says Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District Vector Ecologist, Gregory S. White, PhD.

The traps where mosquitoes tested positive near the Salton Sea were located along 70th Avenue near Johnson, Lincoln, and Pierce Streets; near 71 Avenue and Grant Street; along 72 Avenue near Lincoln and Colfax Streets; and near 73 Avenue and Lincoln Street. The mosquitoes were collected between July 25 and July 30, and were tested by the Center for Vectorborne Diseases at UC Davis.

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District staff are intensifying mosquito surveillance, searching out breeding sites within a mile of the traps where the infected mosquitoes were found, and conducting larval control and barrier treatments where appropriate in those areas. These efforts will help to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further disease transmission.

We encourage residents to take the following actions to help reduce the threat of WNV in the Valley:

Protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- **Apply Insect Repellent.** Use a repellent with DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin (KBR 3023), oil of lemon eucalyptus [p-methane 3, 8-diol (PMD)] or IR3535 according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30% or less on older children. Lemon eucalyptus oil should not be used on children under three years of age.
- **Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours.** Dawn and dusk are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities during that time.
- **Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites.** Wear long-sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors to help keep mosquitoes away from skin.

Mosquito-Proof Your Home

- **Drain Standing Water.** Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places for mosquitoes to breed by draining/discarding items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty unused flowerpots and wading pools. Change water in birdbaths and pet bowls at least weekly.
- **Install or Repair Screens.** Keep mosquitoes outside by having tightly-fitting screens on all of your windows and doors.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals, including sentinel chickens, through the bite of an infected mosquito. Most individuals infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have 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. Anyone with symptoms should contact their health care provider.

Please contact the District at (760) 342-8287 or (888) 343-9399 to report mosquito problems, request mosquitofish, report neglected pools or standing water where mosquitoes breed, and report dead birds. Visit us online at www.cvmvcd.org to obtain more information and submit service requests.

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