



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 23, 2013

WEST NILE VIRUS FOUND IN THERMAL FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2013

A sample of mosquitoes collected from a trap near Highway 111 and 57th Avenue tested positive for West Nile virus

INDIO, CA, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013: The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District has detected West Nile virus (WNV) activity in Thermal for the first time this year. A sample of mosquitoes collected from a trap near the intersection of Highway 111 and 57th Avenue tested positive for the virus on September 20.

So far this year, 42 mosquito samples and 13 sentinel chickens have tested positive for WNV in the Coachella Valley. Last year at this time, there were 110 WNV-positive mosquito samples and 44 WNV-positive sentinel chickens. There have been no human cases of WNV detected in the Valley in 2013. For the latest statewide statistics for WNV activity, please visit <http://westnile.ca.gov>.

In response to the additional WNV activity in the area, District staff are intensifying mosquito surveillance, searching out breeding sites within a mile of the trap where the infected mosquitoes were found, and conducting larval control where appropriate in those areas. We are also distributing WNV prevention and protection tips to residents in the area via the Desert Recreation District and local schools. These efforts will help to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further disease transmission.

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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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