



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 18, 2018

MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN INDIAN WELLS

This is the first sign of WNV in the Coachella Valley for 2018

INDIO, CA, JUNE 18, 2018: Two samples of mosquitoes collected from a trap in Indian Wells tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). They are the first mosquitoes in 2018 to test positive for the virus in the Coachella Valley. The two samples contained a total of 80 mosquitoes from a trap located near Fairway Drive and Cook Street. Virus testing was conducted in the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District lab.

District staff will post disease notification signs in communities located near the trap location and will intensify mosquito surveillance with an increase in traps and inspections for mosquito breeding sites. Technicians will also carry out larval and adult control as necessary in the surrounding area in an effort to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further transmission of the virus.

“This is a bit late in the season to see our first West Nile virus-positive mosquito sample,” said Jill Oviatt, the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District Public Information Manager. “But now that it’s here, we want to make sure residents know what they need to do to prevent getting infected with potentially serious viruses.”

WNV is transmitted to humans via the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are infected when they feed on birds carrying the virus. Most individuals infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. In severe cases, people will need to be hospitalized, and in rare cases the disease can be fatal. Young children, the elderly, or individuals with lowered immune systems are at

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greater risk of experiencing severe symptoms when infected. Anyone with symptoms should contact their health care provider.

In addition to the WNV-positive mosquito sample, detections of the invasive mosquito species *Aedes aegypti* continue across the Valley. This invasive mosquito species is capable of transmitting deadly viruses including dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and yellow fever. These viruses are not currently transmitted in California by mosquitoes, but local transmission could begin if an infected traveler is bitten by one of the invasive mosquitoes in our communities.

The District is asking the public to do all they can to prevent mosquito breeding in their neighborhoods and to report increased mosquito activity.

Prevent mosquitoes around your home:

- Inspect yards for standing water sources and drain water that may have collected under potted plants, in bird baths, discarded tires, and any other items that could collect water.
- Check your rain gutters and lawn drains to make sure they aren't holding water and debris.
- Clean and scrub bird baths and pet watering dishes weekly.
- Check and clean any new potted plant containers that you bring home because they may have *Aedes aegypti* eggs. The eggs can remain viable in dry areas for months.

Prevent mosquito bites:

- Avoid going outside in the hours around dawn and dusk when mosquitoes that can transmit West Nile virus are most active.
- Wear EPA registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label).
- Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, socks and shoes when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure window and door screens are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

As of June 15, WNV has been detected in 12 counties in California in 21 dead birds, 10 mosquito samples, and four people.

Please contact the District at (760) 342-8287 to report mosquito problems, request mosquitofish, and report neglected pools or standing water where mosquitoes breed. Dead birds should be reported to the Californian Department of Public Health at (877) 968-2473 or online at http://westnile.ca.gov/report_wnv.php. Visit us online at www.cvmvcd.org to obtain more information and submit service requests. For the latest statewide statistics for WNV activity, please visit <http://westnile.ca.gov>.

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