



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
August 22, 2018

MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN OASIS

This is the first sign of virus activity in Oasis - residents urged to take precautions.

INDIO, CA, AUGUST 22, 2018: The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District detected West Nile virus (WNV) activity for the first time in Oasis this year. One mosquito sample collected from a District trap located near Buchanan Street and Avenue 80 tested positive for the virus. Mosquitoes collected from traps in Mecca continue to test positive for WNV and St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLEV).

In Mecca, four additional mosquito samples tested positive for SLEV and one mosquito sample tested positive for both WNV and SLEV. The mosquitoes were collected from traps near Lincoln Street and Avenue 70, Pierce Street and Avenue 70, Buchanan Street and Avenue 72, and Colfax Street and Avenue 71.

This brings the total number of WNV-positive mosquito samples to 20 and the number of SLEV-positive mosquito samples to 31 this year. Last year, the District had detected 103 WNV-positive mosquito samples and one SLEV-positive mosquito sample. All mosquito samples were tested at the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District laboratory.

District staff will post disease notification signs in communities where virus activity was detected and will intensify mosquito surveillance and control measures as necessary in the surrounding area. This is part of a continued effort to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further transmission of these viruses in the Coachella Valley. Public outreach staff will be distributing protection and prevention educational materials and mosquito repellent to local community centers, businesses and residents.

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“One bite from one infected mosquito can make a person sick,” said Jeremy Wittie, General Manager at the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District. “This is exactly why we are urging residents to avoid mosquito bites to reduce the risk of getting sick. We urge everyone to cover up and use repellent at dawn and dusk when virus-carrying mosquitoes are the most active.”

WNV and SLEV are transmitted to people via the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are infected when they bite birds with the virus. Most infected people will have no symptoms; others develop fever, headaches, and body aches; hospitalization is required in some cases, and in rare cases the disease is fatal. Young children, the elderly, or individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing severe symptoms when infected. Anyone with symptoms should contact their health care provider. The best way to prevent getting infected is to prevent mosquito bites.

Prevent mosquito bites:

- Avoid going outside in the hours around dawn and dusk when mosquitoes that can transmit West Nile and St. Louis encephalitis viruses 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 active.
- Maintain window and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

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.

Please contact the District at (760) 342-8287 to report mosquito problems, request mosquitofish, and report neglected pools or standing water where mosquitoes breed. Report dead birds to the California Department of Public Health at (877) 968-2473, or submit a report online at <http://westnile.ca.gov>. Visit us online at www.cvmvcd.org to obtain more information.

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