



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 19, 2018

TRUCK APPLICATIONS IN PALM SPRINGS TARGET INVASIVE MOSQUITOES

A spike in the population of invasive Aedes aegypti mosquitoes in Palm Springs triggers effort to reduce mosquito numbers in residential areas and decrease risk of potential virus transmission.

INDIO, CA, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018: The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District will conduct truck-mounted larval mosquito control treatments in Palm Springs where detections of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes have spiked. The invasive mosquito species was detected in Palm Springs initially in November 2016. Since then, the mosquito species has been detected in an area including more than 1,000 acres and thousands of homes. District staff have conducted nearly 3,000 door-to-door inspections, treating properties as necessary; distributed mosquito prevention materials to residents, community centers, and city hall; given community presentations; and organized a block party to educate residents about the importance of removing standing water from yards. The District carried out larval control applications by helicopter last summer, drastically reducing the number of mosquitoes for months. However, invasive mosquito detections have steadily increased.

“If we can stop them before they become adult, potentially disease transmitting, biters, we can protect the community from becoming infected with a serious virus,” said Jill Oviatt, Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District Public Information Manager. “However, the only long-term solution to reducing the risk of disease transmission is for everyone to remove standing water from their properties. No water. No mosquitoes.”

Applications are scheduled Wednesdays and Thursdays between 1 and 7 a.m. for five weeks. Properties bordered by Ramon Road, Sunrise Way, Via Carisma, and the mountain will be treated once per week during the following two-day schedules: September 26/27, October 3/4, 10/11, 17/18, 24/25. Notifications will be delivered to residents by mail this week. Applications will be carried out weather permitting. Application updates will be posted to the District website at <http://www.cvmvcd.org/controlactivities.htm>.

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Larval control applications began last Saturday in Mecca by helicopter to address a similar spike in invasive mosquito detections. The *Ae. aegypti* mosquito is of concern because it is capable of transmitting serious viruses including chikungunya, dengue, and Zika. While these viruses have not been transmitted locally by mosquitoes in California so far, local transmission can begin if an infected person returns to the Coachella Valley after traveling to an area where there is active transmission of these viruses. If that person is then bitten by one of these mosquitoes here, that mosquito can then infect local residents.

The product to be used during the application, VectoBac® WDG, is environmentally friendly, approved for application on organic crops, and has no effect on people or pets at the amounts used for mosquito control. It is registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation. The product is applied according to label instructions by trained and certified technicians. Although the District's mosquito control products pose low risk, residents may choose to stay indoors during and for 30 minutes following the application as a best practice to reduce exposure.

The District recommends that people making plans to travel to areas with active transmission of mosquito-borne viruses protect themselves from mosquito bites by applying repellents containing EPA-registered ingredients, and wearing long sleeve shirts, pants, socks and shoes. Travelers who feel ill after returning from an area where mosquito-borne diseases are transmitted should contact their health care provider and protect themselves from mosquito bites. Residents can check mosquito-borne disease activity ahead of their travels by visiting <https://www.cdc.gov/travel>.

In addition, virus activity in east Valley mosquitoes continues. The District lab detected virus in five mosquito samples, with four samples testing positive for St. Louis encephalitis virus and one sample testing positive for West Nile virus. The virus-positive samples were made up of native mosquito species collected from traps in Mecca, located near Lincoln St. and 72nd and 73rd Ave., and in Thermal, located near Pierce St. and Avenue 70. Details regarding upcoming adult mosquito control operations to address persistent virus activity in the area will be posted on street signs and on the District website. Community commitment to remove standing water sources inside and outside of the home is critical to reducing both invasive and native disease-transmitting mosquito species from the Coachella Valley.

How residents can reduce mosquitoes:

- **Drain Standing Water.** Mosquitoes lay eggs in/near standing water. Drain/discard items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, flower pot saucers, drains, and water-holding plants such as bromeliads (indoors and outdoors). Change water/scrub weekly wading pools, birdbaths, and pet bowls.
- **Install or Repair Screens.** Keep mosquitoes out with tight-fitting screens on all windows and doors.
- **Report mosquito activity to the District.** Contact the District at (760) 342-8287 to report mosquito problems, request mosquitofish, and report neglected pools or standing water where mosquitoes breed. Visit us online at www.cvmvcd.org to obtain more information.

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