

Press Release



CONTACT: Kelly Middleton
Public Information Officer
San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District
1145 N. Azusa Canyon Road
West Covina, CA 91790
(626) 814-9466
kmiddleton@sqvmosquito.org

DATE: July 11, 2005

Vector Control Needs the Public's Help

The California Department of Health Services recently announced the first two human infections of West Nile virus (WNV) in 2005. Although WNV has yet to be found circulating in the San Gabriel Valley this year (as of 7/8/05) we continue to actively monitor the area and are asking for the public's help.

The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District conducts surveillance throughout the year by collecting samples of mosquitoes, and testing wild birds and "sentinel" chickens for the presence of WNV and other viruses.

The presence of dead birds in an area is still an effective and early indication that the virus is circulating in the environment. **We encourage our residents to stay alert and report ALL dead birds** to the District at 626-814-9466 or the State WNV Hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473). Birds can also be reported online at <http://www.westnile.ca.gov>.

Although not all birds can be collected for testing, knowing where birds are dying is critical to the statewide WNV monitoring program as it enables vector control officials to target potentially problematic areas. Birds that are not picked up by the end of the day can be safely discarded in the trashcan by handling them with gloves, a shovel, or an inverted trash bag.

Remember the 5 Ds:

DUSK/DAWN: Try to avoid outdoor activity when mosquitoes are most active

DRAIN/DUMP: Remove standing water from your property and keep fountains and bird baths clean

DRESS: Long sleeves and long pants prevent mosquito bites

DEET: If outdoors when mosquitoes are active, use a mosquito repellent containing DEET according to label directions

DEFEND: Keep mosquitoes out of the house. Keep window and door screens closed and in good repair

Residents are encouraged to call the District to report mosquito problems, request mosquito-eating fish, or to request an inspection. This District is a public health agency funded through an annual benefit assessment. These services are provided to residents at no additional charge.

West Nile virus is now a part of our natural environment. We encourage the public to take the necessary precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones from mosquito bites and help us break the mosquito life cycle by dumping out standing water. This is a community issue and we need everyone's help!

--- END ---