

Press Release

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HEADLINE: West Nile Virus Found in Arcadia

WEST COVINA – The San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District was notified today by the California Department of Health Services that a dead crow submitted to the Department's Dead Bird Surveillance Program on September 3rd from the city of Arcadia, CA tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). This is the first confirmation of the virus in Los Angeles County this year.

West Nile virus was first detected in mosquitoes and sentinel chickens in California on August 20, 2003, in Imperial County.

West Nile virus was first identified in the United States in the fall of 1999 in New York City, and has surprised experts with its rapid spread across the US. Although WNV could not be prevented from entering California, the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District is concerned and has been preparing for the arrival of WNV into this area since 2000.

In coordination with State and local agencies, the District employs an integrated mosquito management approach focusing on disease surveillance, vector control, and public outreach to reduce mosquito populations and minimize the risk of mosquito-transmitted disease. This proactive approach, although inherently more difficult, provides the most effective environmentally sound mosquito control possible in our urban environments.

West Nile virus is a mosquito-transmitted virus passed primarily between birds by mosquitoes. Humans, horses and other animals can become infected with WNV if bitten

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by an infected mosquito. Although most people exhibit no symptoms, the elderly and individuals with suppressed immune symptoms are at greatest risk for more serious, and potentially life threatening illness.

Although the likelihood of being bitten by an infected mosquito is low, the San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District urges residents to take precautions now to reduce exposure to mosquitoes and eliminate potential breeding sources around their property:

- Avoid outdoor activity when mosquitoes are most active – from dusk until dawn.
- If outdoors, wear protective clothing and apply mosquito repellants according to label directions – those containing DEET have been proven to be the most effective.
- Ensure door and window screens are secured and in good repair to prevent mosquito entrance into homes.
- Eliminate standing and stagnant water. Eggs are laid and immature mosquitoes develop in dirty pools & spas, ponds, bird baths, buckets, barrels, children's toys etc. Immature mosquitoes become biting adults in 5-7 days.
- Free mosquito-eating fish are available for permanent water sources (ponds, troughs, large fountains) at mosquito & vector control districts.
- Contact the district to report mosquito problems or green pools/spas.

Additional information or requests for service can be obtained at www.sgvmosquito.org or by calling (626) 814-9466. The District provides mosquito and other vector control services as a public service to residents in the San Gabriel Valley. Funding is secured through an annual benefit assessment; therefore, residents will not be charged for our assistance.

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