

# West Nile virus expanding hold on Butte County

Staff Reports (ChicoER.com)

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OROVILLE — A group of mosquitoes collected in the Nelson area and a bird from Durham have tested positive for West Nile virus, according to the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District.

With increasing mosquito populations and widespread distribution of the virus in Butte County, the district urges residents to drain unneeded standing water, report suspected mosquito-breeding sites, and protect themselves from mosquito bites.

West Nile virus has reached Butte County every year since 2004. In that time, 104 residents have been infected with the virus and seven have died.

Horses are also affected by the disease and have a high mortality rate if not current with their West Nile virus vaccinations.

Mosquitoes contract the virus when they feed on infected birds, then spread the virus when the mosquitoes seek other hosts to bite.

The risk of mosquito-borne disease can be reduced by staying inside when mosquitoes are active, especially at dusk and dawn, and making sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens.

If out when mosquitoes are active, apply insect repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus according to label instructions. Long pants and long-sleeved shirts, socks and shoes also help.

Eliminate or report to the district standing water that can support mosquito-breeding.

The district can be reached at 533-6038 or 342-7350 6 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday, or through its website at [www.BCMVCD.com](http://www.BCMVCD.com).