

West Nile Virus Now 'Widespread' throughout Shasta, Butte Counties

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The Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District has confirmed at least four dead birds and 13 mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile Virus last week. All four of the birds were found in the Chico area. According to the District's the infected mosquito pools were all found the Chico and Honcut areas of Butte County.

"With elevated levels of WNV being reported and identified by neighboring counties and the wide-spread distribution locally, it's crucial that residents protect themselves from mosquito bites," said Doug Weseman, Public Information Officer for the District.

Residents should use mosquito repellents when they go outdoors, and/or wear long sleeves and pants especially at the times when mosquitoes are most active (mornings and evenings). WNV is preventable, you only need to prevent the mosquito bite."

The recent discovery of the deceased birds now brings the total located in the county to 5, and positive pools to 14. The district urges residents to take all precautions to drain any and all unneeded standing water, report any mosquito breeding sites to the District, and protect themselves from bites.

Shasta County officials say West Nile Virus is now widespread throughout its county.

A Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District official said the virus has now been detected in six birds, three mosquito samples and three sentinel chickens scattered over a broad area of central Shasta County.

"More suspect samples are waiting to be tested and news WNV indicators are being found on a daily basis," says Vector Ecologist John Albright.

On July 22, The Butte County and Vector Control District confirmed a "pool" of mosquitos from the Nelson area tested positive for the virus. WNV was also positively confirmed in a bird in the Durham area a week prior.

According to the State of California, there have been 14 confirmed human cases throughout the state in 2013. Of those 14 cases, two of those confirmed cases were located in Glenn County. In 2012, 479 cases of WNV were confirmed in Claif., resulting in 20 deaths.

Three cases have been identified in horses, which historically have proven very lethal to them in the past prior to widespread vaccination. The state has also identified 452 birds which have died due to the virus in 2013 as well as over 1,000 mosquito pools which have tested positive throughout the state. For more information visit <http://westnile.ca.gov/>.

