

# Butte County, Hamilton City residents at increased risk for West Nile Virus

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Health officials say West Nile Virus is extremely active and residents of Butte County and Hamilton City are at an elevated risk for the virus.

In 2015, there have been two confirmed human cases of West Nile Virus in Butte County, and 49 groups of mosquitoes, 18 sentinel chickens, and 8 dead birds that have tested positive. Officials have located the virus in Chico, Hamilton City, Paradise, Oroville, Palermo, Honcut, Biggs, Gridley, Richvale, Nelson, and rural areas along the west side of Butte County.

Activity is continuing to increase throughout the state and Butte County is following the trend. The virus has been identified in Butte County every year since its arrival in 2004.

Since 2004, 154 residents have been infected with the virus, seven of which have lost their lives due to the disease.

With increasing mosquito populations and the detection and wide-spread distribution of WNV within Butte County and Hamilton City, officials are urging residents to take all precautions necessary to drain any and all un-needed standing water, report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites to the District, and to protect themselves from the bites of mosquitoes.

Matthew Ball, District Manager for the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District stated, "There are a lot of mosquitoes carrying the virus throughout our area. It's crucial that residents protect themselves from mosquitoes as they are only one mosquito bite away from possibly getting sick.

Residents should use mosquito repellents when they go outdoors, and wear long sleeves and long pants in the mornings and evenings when mosquitoes are most active.