

# Butte Health Department reports severe West Nile virus cases

Staff Reports (ChicoER.com)

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OROVILLE — Three more cases of West Nile virus, including two of the most severe type, were reported this morning by the Butte County Public Health Department.

The department urged the public to take precautions against the disease, which is transmitted by mosquitoes.

"In recent days, three new cases of West Nile virus have been reported ... . Two of the three cases are neuroinvasive disease, which is the most severe form ...," a news release from the department stated.

There have now been four human cases of West Nile in the county this year.

Cases to date have been in people residing in Chico, Oroville or southern Butte County areas, but the risk is likely high throughout the county, the release said.

The newest cases have occurred in middle-aged individuals.

"This is the time of year when West Nile virus poses its greatest health threat. People need to take extra steps now, including use of repellent, to protect themselves from mosquito bites and virus infection," Butte County health officer Dr. Mark Lundberg was quoted as saying in the release.

As of Tuesday, West Nile virus has been detected in 34 of California's 58 counties. Fifteen counties in the state have reported human cases of West Nile. In Butte County, numerous dead birds and groups of trapped mosquitoes have tested positive for the virus.