

Fourteen cases of West Nile virus this year in Butte County

Staff Reports (ChicoER.com)

Posted: 09/11/2013 04:09:03 PM PDT

OROVILLE — Fourteen confirmed cases of West Nile virus have been reported in Butte County this year, which is more than the total cases reported in 2012.

"The increase in human cases is very concerning as (West Nile) activity typically continues through October. With at least another month to go and especially with this warm weather, Butte County residents are strongly encouraged to protect themselves from mosquito bites," said Dr. Mark Lundberg, Butte County health officer, in a press release.

Two cases this year involved children, and one case is a person in their early 20s. The remaining cases are in adults, predominately ages 50 and older.

The majority of West Nile virus cases occurred in people who reside in the lower elevation areas, including in and around Chico, Biggs, Gridley, Durham and Oroville.

Seven people have died due to the virus since 2004, when West Nile virus was first identified in the county, the county said.

No deaths have occurred this year, but six of the 14 confirmed cases have been hospitalized with the most severe form of the virus, Neuroinvasive disease, according to the county.