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For Immediate Release
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HUMAN CASES OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN BUTTE COUNTY HAVE ALREADY EXCEEDED LAST YEAR'S TOTAL

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — Fourteen confirmed human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) have been reported in Butte County this year. Butte County already has more confirmed human cases this year than the total reported in 2012.

“The increase in human cases is very concerning as WNV 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,” stated Dr. Mark Lundberg, Butte County Health Officer.

Although most people with WNV have no signs or symptoms it can be very devastating for others. Since 2004 when WNV was first identified in Butte County, 7 people have lost their lives due to the illness. Fortunately no deaths have occurred this year, but 6 of the 14 confirmed cases have been hospitalized with Neuroinvasive Disease, the most severe form of the virus. Two cases this year have involved children and one case is a person in their early 20's; the remaining cases are in adults, predominantly persons 50 and older. The majority of cases have occurred in persons who reside in the lower elevation areas, including in and around Chico, Biggs/Gridley, Durham, and Oroville.

In Butte County as of September 10, 2013, 42 dead birds, 29 mosquito pools, and 50 sentinel chickens have tested positive for WNV. Due to the increased activity, Butte County residents are at elevated risk for WNV. The Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District urges residents to take all precautions necessary to drain any and all un-needed standing water and to report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites to Butte County Vector Control. Reports can be made by phone at (530) 533-6038 or (530) 342-7350 or on-line at www.BCMVCD.com.

Dr. Lundberg emphasizes, “Be diligent in protecting yourselves and your families as WNV is transmitted to humans through a mosquito bite. The best way to reduce the risk of infection is by practicing the **Three Ds**.”

1. DEET – Use proven insect repellent like DEET. Other repellents that are recommended are picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Always use according to label instructions. Repellents keep the mosquitoes from biting you. DEET can be used safely on infants and children 2 months of age and older.
2. DAWN AND DUSK – Mosquitoes bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear proper clothing and repellent if outside during these times. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep mosquitoes out. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.

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3. DRAIN – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, rain gutters and pet bowls. If you know of a swimming pool that is not being properly maintained, please contact the local Mosquito and Vector Control District at (530) 342-7350 or (530) 533-6038.

For more information or to report a dead bird or squirrels visit www.westnile.ca.gov or call 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473). Residents can also track West Nile Virus activity in Butte County and neighboring counties on the website.

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Butte County Public Health Department
Our Mission: To protect the public through promoting individual,
community, and environmental health.