



Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Manager

For Immediate Release

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Subject: **FIRST BUTTE COUNTY WEST NILE VIRUS POSITIVE INDICATOR IN 2009**

Contact: District Manager, Matt Ball & Public Information Officer, Doug Weseman
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Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) has received confirmation on July 8, 2009 that the county's first West Nile virus (WNV) positive indicator has been located and identified. Three of the dead birds reported by county citizens that are collected by the District have tested positive for WNV. This is the first detection of WNV in Butte County for 2009. Two of the positive WNV birds are from Oroville and one is from Chico.

There have been no reported human, horse or chicken cases in the county to date. WNV positive indicators have been identified in 25 counties in California, including Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura, and Yolo.

Dr. Lundberg from Butte County Department of Public Health urges all Butte County residents to act now to prevent WNV infections. "Wear repellents, reduce contact with mosquitoes when possible, learn about prevention, and report all dead birds and squirrels." Matt Ball, district manager for Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District said, "It's crucial that all county residents act now to ensure that no standing water is on their property and to take all precautions to avoid the bites of mosquitoes."

The virus is usually prevalent from May through October when mosquitoes are most abundant. Mosquitoes obtain the virus when they feed on infected birds, then spread the virus when the mosquitoes seek other hosts to bite.

In addition to birds and humans, horses are also affected by WNV. Due to the high mortality rate of horses that contract the disease, owners are encouraged to make sure their horses are kept current with their WNV vaccinations.

Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne disease by following these prevention tips:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dusk and dawn
- If you must be outdoors when mosquitoes are active, wear long pants, and long-sleeved shirts, socks and shoes

- Before going outdoors, apply insect repellent containing DEET, Picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus according to label instructions
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding
- Report standing water to Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District
- Contact Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live, work or play

The public is encouraged to become part of the state's monitoring effort for WNV by reporting any dead birds that may have been dead for less than 48 hours. Please call 1-877-968-2473 to report dead birds that may be accepted for testing, or visit the CDHS website, www.westnile.ca.gov. Individuals should take note of the location and condition of the bird before calling for further instructions. While there is no evidence that people can get the virus from handling live or dead birds, individuals should not attempt to catch or handle them.

For more information call the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District at 530-533-6038 or 530-342-7350.