



Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Manager

For Immediate Release

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Subject: **WEST NILE VIRUS ACTIVITY INCREASES IN BUTTE COUNTY**

Contact: Public Information Officer Doug Weseman
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West Nile virus (WNV) activity in Butte County continues to increase with the recent positive test of a mosquito pool in the Nelson/Richvale area. With an increase in mosquito populations and the detection of WNV in adult mosquitoes, the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) sprayed the Nelson, Richvale, west side of Thermalito, East Biggs, and Biggs areas on August 3, 2010 to reduce adult mosquito populations and reduce the risk of WNV transmission. The District has detected positive WNV in (2) dead birds, (1) mosquito pool, and (1) squirrel to date. One of the positive birds is from the Chico area and the other is from the Oroville area. The positive squirrel was found in the paradise area.

There have been no reported human or horse WNV cases in the county to date. WNV positive indicators have been identified in 22 counties in California, including Butte, Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tulare, and Yolo. Matt Ball, district manager for Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District said, "It's imperative that county residents be aware that WNV is active and to avoid mosquito bites by whatever means necessary. Residents are urged to do their part to prevent mosquitoes from breeding by inspecting and eliminating all standing water from their properties."

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 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 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, and/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 the birds.

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