



Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Matthew C. Ball
Manager

For Immediate Release

Date: September 29, 2010

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

Contact: Public Information Officer Doug Weseman at 530-533-6038 and/or 530-519-1852

West Nile virus (WNV) activity in Butte County continues to increase. The District has now confirmed that WNV has been identified positive in 1 human, 6 wild dead birds, 7 mosquito pools, 6 sentinel chickens, 1 squirrel, and 1 horse throughout Butte County ranging from Honcut to Chico. A mosquito pool is a collection of live caught mosquitoes, identified to species, and tested in a collection of no more than 50 of the same species. The District reports that no WNV positive indicators have been identified in Hamilton City to date.

WNV positive indicators have been identified in 34 counties in California, including Alameda, Amador, Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Imperial, Kern, Kings, Lake, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Mono, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Yolo, and Yuba. To the right is a statewide comparison to 2009 at the same time last year.

WNV Indicators Compared to 2009

As of Sep 28, 2010	2009	2010
Counties	41	34
Human cases	68	55
Horses	11	16
Dead birds	449	359
Mosquito samples	1005	1217
Sentinel chickens	309	219
Squirrels	9	16

2009 YTD - Year to date corresponds to the same time last year.

Matt Ball, district manager for Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District said, "It's concerning that WNV activity continues to increase throughout the month of September. Normally, WNV in Butte County has started to decline in September. I urge resident to remain extremely cautious, when outdoors. Mosquito populations are elevated especially in communities near rice. WNV has been detected all throughout the county and residents are urged to safe guard their properties from mosquito-breeding and safe guard themselves from mosquito bites."

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.