



Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

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For Immediate Release

Date: September 2, 2013

Contact: Public Information Officer Doug Weseman or District Manager Matthew Ball
Contact at 530-533-6038 and/or 530-342-7350

Subject: **BUTTE COUNTY AND HAMILTON CITY RESIDENTS REMAIN AT AN ELEVATED RISK FOR WEST NILE VIRUS**

Thirty-four groups of mosquitoes, thirty-nine sentinel chickens, thirty-nine dead birds, and eight humans are confirmed positive for West Nile virus

The Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) announced today that West Nile virus (WNV) activity continues to remain active. The District received confirmation that more mosquito pools, dead birds, sentinel chickens and humans have tested positive for WNV. The total number of mosquito pools that have tested positive with WNV in 2013 is 34; the total number of sentinel chickens that have tested positive with WNV is 39; the total number of dead birds that have tested positive with WNV is 39; the total number of WNV human infections in 2013 is currently 8. With increasing mosquito populations and the detection and wide-spread distribution of WNV within Butte County, the District **URGES** residents to take all precautions necessary to drain any and all unneeded standing water, report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites to the District, and to protect themselves from the bites of mosquitoes.

WNV activity is continuing to increase throughout the state and Butte County is following that trend. Matthew Ball, District Manager for the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District stated, "Butte County and Hamilton City residents are at an elevated risk for contracting WNV from infected mosquitoes. It's imperative that residents assist with the prevention of mosquito breeding by inspecting and eliminating all standing water from their properties. WNV has been found widespread throughout Hamilton City and areas of Butte County." WNV has been identified in Butte County every year since its arrival in 2004. Since 2004, 112 residents have been infected with the virus, 7 of which have lost their lives due to the disease. The District has located the mosquito transmitted disease in Chico, Hamilton City, Magalia, Paradise, Oroville, Palermo, Honcut, Biggs, Gridley, Richvale, Nelson, Dayton, and rural areas along the west side of Butte County.

The District's Public Information Officer Doug Weseman said "With elevated levels of WNV being reported and identified by neighboring counties and the wide-spread distribution locally, it's crucial that residents protect themselves from mosquito bites. Residents should use mosquito repellents when they go outdoors, and/or wear long sleeves and long pants especially at the times when mosquitoes are most active (mornings and evenings). WNV is preventable; you only need to prevent the mosquito bite!" The virus is usually prevalent from May through October when mosquitoes are

most abundant. Mosquitoes contract 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 California Department of Public Health's (CDPH) 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.

CDPH was recently informed that federal funds from CDC that support the California West Nile virus surveillance program were reduced by 40% for the grant cycle that started August 1, 2013. Federal funds have supported many components of the WNV surveillance program, and in particular, the dead bird testing program. At this time, birds will no longer be tested for WNV. However, the public is still encouraged to report any and all dead birds.

The District requests any and all assistance by area residents to report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites and/or any mosquito activity. Reports can be made by phone at 530-533-6038 or 530-342-7350 or website at www.BCMVCD.com.

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

For any person(s) interested in an interview, please know that the District will be closed on Friday, August 9, 2013. District staff are available to answer any questions and/or inquiries you have Monday through Thursday, 6:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Thank you