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For Immediate Release

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BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CONFIRMS FIRST HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN 2013

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — An elementary school aged child from North Chico has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) according to Dr. Mark Lundberg, Butte County Health Officer. This is the first confirmed human case in Butte County for 2013.

"This first confirmed WNV case reminds us that we must take precautions to protect ourselves and our families from mosquito bites," said Dr. Lundberg, Butte County Health Officer. "We are definitely seeing WNV activity in Butte County. The public should take extra care to avoid mosquito bites. Prevention is the key to stopping the spread of the virus."

As of August 2, 2013, WNV activity has been detected in 33 of California's 58 counties, with 14 counties reporting human cases of WNV infection. In Butte County, five dead birds have tested positive for the virus, 14 mosquito pools, 13 sentinel chickens and one squirrel.

All ages are vulnerable to infection and should be educated about WNV prevention. However, most individuals who become infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Individuals 50 years of age and older have a higher chance of getting sick and are more likely to develop serious symptoms if infected. Recent data also indicates that those with diabetes or hypertension may be at greatest risk for developing serious symptoms.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Residents can reduce the risk of infection 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.
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.

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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.