



Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District

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Matthew C. Ball
Manager

For Immediate Release

Date: July 15, 2024

Subject: **WEST NILE VIRUS IDENTIFIED AND NOW ACTIVE IN BUTTE COUNTY**

Contact: Assistant Manager Aaron Lumsden or Entomologist Amanda Bradford
Contact at 530-533-6038 and/or 530-342-7350

WEST NILE VIRUS IS NOW ACTIVE IN BUTTE COUNTY

One dead bird that was collected in Durham has tested positive with West Nile virus (WNV). With increasing mosquito populations and the detection of WNV within Butte County, the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) urges residents to take all precautions necessary to drain any and all un-needed standing water, report any suspected mosquito-breeding sites to the District, and protect themselves from the bites of mosquitoes.

This is the first positive indicator of WNV in the county for 2024. WNV is active throughout the State of California and activity is rising. Matthew Ball, District Manager for the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District stated, "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." WNV has been identified in Butte County every year since its arrival in 2004. Since 2004, 287 residents have been infected with the virus, 10 of which have lost their lives.

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 the **7 Ds** of prevention:

- **D**rain any standing water that may produce mosquitoes, this includes flowerpots, old tires, and buckets. Some species of mosquitoes can lay their eggs in very small sources of water, like a bottle cap.
- **D**efend yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent and making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- **D**usk or **D**awn, avoid outside activities.

- **Dress** in long sleeves and pants when mosquitoes are active.
- **Door** and window screens should be in good working condition and free of holes and tears. This will prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
- **District personnel** are available to address any mosquito problem you may be experiencing, to report water that may be breeding mosquitoes, and to answer any questions you may have.

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 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.

The public is also encouraged 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.ButteMosquito.com.

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

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.