



# County of Santa Cruz

## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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### PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

### PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

<b>To:</b>	<b>All Local Media</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Arnold Leff, MD, Interim Public Health Officer County of Santa Cruz</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>July 18, 2016</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>West Nile Virus</b>

### SITUATION

The Davis Arbovirus Research and Training (DART) Lab at UC Davis notified Santa Cruz County Public Health Division on Friday, July 15, 2016 of this summer's first find of a West Nile virus (WNV) positive sample of mosquitoes in Santa Cruz County. The sample of seven *Culex pipiens*, or Northern house mosquitoes, was collected by dry-ice baited trap hung by Mosquito and Vector Control (MVC) staff overnight on July 11 at Neary Lagoon in Santa Cruz and submitted on July 12, 2016. WNV is primarily a bird virus that can affect humans and other animals and can be spread by the bite of summer mosquitoes. In humans, symptoms of infection range from no symptoms to fever and flu-like illness to serious illness affecting the central nervous system in less than 1% of cases.

This marks the second time since WNV was introduced into California that a positive mosquito sample has been found in the County. This event follows last week's discovery of a WNV-positive dead bird found in the upper West Side of Santa Cruz. Twenty-seven other counties in California have WNV activity to date <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>.

The Public Health Division is coordinating activities with the California Department of Public Health and MVC throughout the county. MVC staff will conduct surveillance for mosquito breeding sources in the areas surrounding the find, and post notifications in the area.

### INFORMATION

- Last year California had 783 reported human cases and 53 deaths attributed to West Nile virus.
- No locally acquired human cases have been found in the County this season or in years past.
- WNV is transmitted to humans and animals by the bite of an infected mosquito and is not transmitted by casual person-to-person or animal-to-person contact. Rarely has WNV been transmitted via blood transfusions or organ transplants.
- Blood bank procedures now screen for WNV.

- There is no human vaccine.
- There is no evidence of horses or birds transmitting WNV directly to humans.
- Horses can become ill or die from WNV; however, cats and dogs seem to be resistant. There is a vaccine available for horses. Contact your veterinarian for details.
- You may report a dead bird by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD or online at <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>.
- Mosquito fish, which eat the immature mosquitos, are available from Mosquito & Vector Control for ponds, water features and unused pools. Call (831) 454-2590 for details or go to [www.agdept.com/mvc/html](http://www.agdept.com/mvc/html).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The best way to protect yourself from WNV is to prevent exposure to mosquitoes.
- **Drain** all standing water at least once a week to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Be sure to check rain gutters, plants, buckets, pool and spa covers, birdbaths and any other items in your yard that may contain standing water.
- **Dress** in long sleeves and long pants when outdoors.
- Avoid going outside at **dusk and dawn** when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use mosquito repellent that contains **DEET**, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin when you go outside. You may also spray clothing with repellents that contain permethrin. Do not spray repellent on skin under clothing. Do not use permethrin directly on skin. Repellents are safe and effective when used according to the direction on the package. Be sure to read and always follow the manufacturer's DIRECTION FOR USE instructions.
- Make sure windows and screens are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from entering the home.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- For more detailed information on WNV go to [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov).
- Also visit Mosquito & Vector Control at [www.agdept.com/mvc.html](http://www.agdept.com/mvc.html).

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Santa Cruz County