



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY

To:	All Local Media
From:	Arnold Leff, MD, Acting Public Health Officer County of Santa Cruz
Date:	July 7, 2016
Subject:	West Nile Virus

SITUATION

West Nile virus (WNV) has been detected for the first time in 2016 in our county.

- A dead bird has tested positive for an acute infection of the virus.
- An acute infection of a dead bird indicates that there are mosquitoes in the area that can transmit the infection.
- The bird was found in the upper West Side (Santa Cruz) area near Nobel Drive.
- There has been WNV activity in many counties of the state.
- As of today, there have been no human cases reported this year in the state.
- Mosquito and Vector Control technicians have been sent to the site to target mosquito-breeding sources in the area and to conduct disease surveillance by trapping adult mosquitoes.
- The Public Health Division is coordinating activities with the California Department of Public Health and the Mosquito & Vector Control throughout the county.
- Health care providers in the county have knowledge of specific information on signs and symptoms of WNV and have been performing testing as appropriate.

INFORMATION

- 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, tree squirrels, 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.

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.
- Also visit Mosquito & Vector Control at www.agdept.com/mvc/html or call (831) 454-2590.
- To report biting mosquitoes email: PestHelp@agdept.com.

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.



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Santa Cruz County