



**Greater Los Angeles County
Vector Control District**
12545 Florence Ave.
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(562) 944-9656

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

January 26, 2006

Contact: Truc Dever
Public Information Officer
(562) 944-6789
(562) 244-2648 cell
E-mail: tdever@glacvcd.org

Early 2007 West Nile virus Activity in L.A. County Suggests Year-long
Transmission Activity

Santa Fe Springs—Mosquito and bird samples collected in Los Angeles County this year have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These are the first WNV positives reported in L.A. County in 2007.

A mosquito pool collected in Rowland Heights in zip code 91748 on January 11, 2007 by the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District was confirmed positive for WNV by the UC Davis arbovirus diagnostic laboratory.

An American Crow collected in Northridge by the Veterinary Public Health Services, L.A. County Department of Health Services on January 4, 2007 also tested positive for the virus.

This is the earliest in the year West Nile positive activity has been identified in L.A. County since the virus invaded California in 2003. Last year, the first West Nile positive mosquito pool was collected in Northridge on May 10, 2006. The last positive mosquito pool was collected in Encino on December 28, 2006. The detection of early viral activity this year suggests year-long WN transmission activity in the L.A. Basin.

“We found a small number of mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus this year and are informing the public by posting disease warning signs and through the media,” says Joseph F. Sanzone, new District Manager for the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District. Sanzone says the District will be stepping-up surveillance and control of mosquitoes that may be active in the area.

“The District is taking immediate, proactive action to conduct further surveillance above and below ground to assess the situation,” comments Minoo B. Madon, the District’s

-More-

Scientific-Technical Services Director. "You've got to hit them hard and hit them early to knock down the late spring and early summer population."

Madon says the early detection of WNV activity this year was the result of a collaborative effort between the District and UC Davis. Both organizations have been working together on a five-year West Nile virus project. "Had there not been a collaborative effort with UCD, this important information would not have surfaced," adds Madon.

Madon says the public should also take additional responsibility in protecting themselves. West Nile virus is here to stay so residents can protect themselves and their families by playing an active role in mosquito prevention by doing the following:

- Inspect front and backyards. Eliminate standing water in clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, discarded tires, buckets, watering troughs or anything that holds water for more than a week to break the mosquito life cycle.
- Ensure that swimming pools, spas, and ponds are properly maintained.
- Change the water in pet dishes and replace water in birdbaths weekly.
- Fix leaky faucets and sprinklers that may create puddles.
- Wear long sleeve shirts and pants outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends using mosquito repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes
- Pick up FREE mosquitofish at your local vector control district for placement in out-of-order swimming pools, spas, and ponds to control mosquitoes. Please call your local district before arriving to confirm mosquitofish are available.
- A West Nile virus vaccine for horses is available and horse owners should contact a veterinarian about timely vaccination.

The public is encouraged to report dead birds to help with West Nile virus surveillance and control efforts, as birds play an important role in maintaining and spreading the virus. The CA Department of Health Services toll-free hotline is 877-WNV BIRD or visit on-line at: www.westnile.ca.gov.

For more information please call (562) 944-9656 or visit: www.glacvcd.org