



Merced County Mosquito Abatement District
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NEGLECTED SWIMMING POOLS IN MERCED COUNTY ARE A CAUSE FOR MAJOR CONCERN FOR MERCED COUNTY MOSQUITO ABATEMENT OFFICIALS

MERCED, CA– The Merced County Mosquito Abatement District (District) conducted aerial photography to assess neglected swimming pools in Merced County to locate potential mosquito breeding sources. There were 1,679 neglected swimming pools detected. Of that 1,180 were deemed “green”, 208 considered “murky” and 289 were “empty”.

Neglected swimming pools, ornamental ponds, or other cryptic backyard sources are responsible for breeding the types of mosquitoes that carry mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile Virus (WNV) and St. Louis Encephalitis Virus (SLEV). According to General Manager Rhiannon Jones, “This is the first time Merced County Mosquito Abatement District has used aerial photography to assess the neglected swimming pool situation. The number of neglected swimming pools in our area are much higher than expected.”

In addition to having mosquitoes that carry WNV and SLEV, Merced County has invasive Aedes mosquitoes in the City of Merced. It is paramount that citizens take a proactive approach to control mosquitoes in individual backyards before the summer months when mosquito populations are at their highest.

“Homeowners and/or Current Residents with neglected swimming pools can anticipate letters from the District strongly encouraging that they remedy the potential mosquito-breeding source along with a picture of the swimming pool in question,” states General Manager Jones. The District is recommending that property owners take responsibility for maintaining their swimming pools and ornamental ponds to prevent mosquito breeding. The District is also willing to work with residents with regards to treating sources until a permanent solution can be made.

The District anticipates more SLEV and WNV detections this year and would like to remind residents on ways in which they can help by taking the following precautions:

- **Drain** standing water. Mosquitoes prefer to lay eggs in stagnant water.
- **Defend** yourself against mosquitoes using repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.
- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are present, typically **Dawn** and **Dusk**.
- **Report neglected swimming pools** to the District. *Anonymous calls accepted.*

To report mosquito-breeding problem areas and request service, Merced County residents should contact Merced County Mosquito Abatement District at (209) 722-1527 [main], (800) 622-3242 [toll], or visit their website www.mcmosquito.org.

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