



Merced County Mosquito Abatement District
3478 Beachwood Drive, P.O. Box 909, Merced CA 95341
Phone: (209) 722-1527
Toll: (800) 622-3242
Fax: (209) 722-3051
www.mcmosquito.org

NUMBER: 18-04
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

Date: August 14, 2018

FIRST 2018 HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN MERCED COUNTY

Merced County – Merced County Department of Public Health officials notified Merced County Mosquito Abatement District (District) that a 62-year-old male contracted West Nile Virus (WNV) fever from a mosquito bite. The date of the infection was July 23, 2018. This is first human case of WNV in the county this year. In addition to the human case, the District has detected WNV in seven sentinel chickens and four mosquito samples to date. As of August 10, 2018, 19 human cases have been confirmed in California.

Although most people (70-80%) who become infected with WNV do not develop any symptoms, county residents are encouraged to continue their efforts to prevent mosquito bites and WNV by taking the following steps:

- Eliminate sources of standing water where mosquitoes lay their eggs.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active (dawn and dusk).
- Apply insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET when outdoors, according to label instructions. In addition to DEET-based products, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) also recommends insect repellent containing oil of lemon eucalyptus and Picaridin.

The District has been busy locating mosquito breeding sources and treating them by ground or aerial spray equipment as necessary. The District continues to be concerned with neglected swimming pools where WNV-carrying mosquitoes prefer to lay their eggs in urban areas. Reporting neglected swimming pools can help the District with mosquito control efforts. The District also provides mosquitofish, free of charge, to be placed in ornamental ponds as well as other mosquito breeding locations.

According to officials, reporting and testing dead birds is another important step in preventing WNV. WNV is initially brought into the area by infected birds. A confirmed case of the virus in dead birds or mosquito samples helps to identify areas that require treatment to reduce mosquito activity. To report a dead bird, call the California State Hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD or report it online at www.westnile.gov.

To report mosquito breeding problem areas, Merced County residents should contact Merced County Mosquito Abatement District at (209) 722-1527 or visit www.mcmosquito.org.

For inquires regarding WNV and human infections, residents should contact Merced County Department of Public Health at (209) 381-1200.

###END###