

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MORE HUMAN CASES OF WEST NILE VIRUS REPORTED IN SHASTA COUNTY

SHASTA COUNTY - The Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency and the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District have documented seven West Nile Virus (WNV) cases to date. Five of the seven cases were hospitalized. Four of the seven cases were determined to have been contracted in Shasta County, while the other three cases were contracted in other states during their travels. The most recent case is an adult who was hospitalized on Sept. 23rd.

This year, Shasta County has experienced high mosquito numbers and West Nile virus activity largely due to the above average precipitation we received throughout the season. “We will continue to see mosquito activity and a higher risk for mosquito bites until we see nighttime temperatures drop below 50-degrees Fahrenheit for an extended period of time,” notes Peter Bonkrude, District Manager for Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control.

West Nile Virus is almost always transmitted to people from the bite of an infected mosquito. It is not transmitted by contact with people or other animals.

Most people infected with WNV do not have noticeable symptoms and likely will not know that they have been infected. Some people may develop mild symptoms, including fever, headache and fatigue. Rarely, WNV can cause serious neurologic illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis, which can lead to long-term disability or death. If you have symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately. Tell your doctor if you have had recent mosquito bites.

West Nile Virus can be found in all parts of Shasta County. Residents are urged to include effective mosquito repellent as part of their regular outdoor routine. The best way to avoid the virus is to prevent mosquito bites using the Four Ds:

- **DRAIN** standing water around the house every 4 to 5 days. It is where mosquitoes lay eggs. This includes tires, cans, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles.

- DUSK & DAWN are when mosquitoes that carry the virus are most active. Limit outdoor activities or take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.
- DEFEND yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent, making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- DRESS in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends DEET and three other mosquito repellents for use on skin and clothing:

- Picaridin
- Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus
- IR3535

Always follow instructions on containers carefully.

The Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District, Burney Basin Mosquito Abatement District, and the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District have been performing extensive control measures in and around Shasta County to reduce both larval and adult mosquitoes.

To help fight West Nile Virus (WNV) in Shasta County:

- Report significant mosquito problems to Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (serving limited areas of the greater Redding, Anderson and Shasta Lake area) at (530) 365-3768 or shastamosquito.org, the Burney Mosquito Abatement District (serving the Burney Basin) at (530) 335-2133, the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District (serving the Fall River Valley) at (530) 336-5740.
- Report recently dead birds to the state hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or visit their website at westnile.ca.gov. Though not all birds can be picked up for testing, all calls help track the virus. Dead birds should be picked up with a plastic bag and not touched.
- Vaccinate your horses. WNV mortality is high in unvaccinated horses. Vaccines must be given before the animal is exposed.

For more information about how to prevent West Nile Virus in Shasta County, please contact Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District, (530) 365-3768 or visit www.shastamosquito.org

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