

West Nile Virus 2005 Public Health Response

**Sacramento County Division of
Public Health
Department of Health and Human
Services**



Preparations: 2002

1. Meetings with SYMVC, coordination of activities
2. Public Health Information line: information of West Nile Virus in eight different languages: (916) 874-2001 BT funding as communications exercise.
3. Letter to physicians re testing and reportability
4. Educational presentations to advisory boards, citizen groups.
5. CUBS for surge capacity to answer telephone calls



Preparations: 2003

- Ongoing coordination with SYMVC
- Educational messages and outreach “If needed we will spray” SYMVC takes the lead Posters, materials distributed
- Letter to all physicians
- Outreach to senior centers, nursing homes
- Press release templates created
- Ongoing education to over 50 groups and through the media. “Birds could fall out of the sky”
- Public Health Laboratory can test for WNV
- Recorded line maintained
- Discussion with animal control, dead bird surveillance



Mosquito Control

Habitat Elimination



Adulticiding

Larviciding

**Spraying pesticide
if necessary**



WNV arrives: 2004

- Positive birds in south area found early in summer.
- Horses affected in county.
- Distribution of educational posters and materials
- Media releases, presentations stepped up
- Insect repellent event in senior center.
- “How to pick up a dead bird” video at McKinley Park with SYMVC.
- “If we need to, we will spray”



WNV arrives: 2004

- **Seroconversion study: 76 SYVMC and CRP volunteers. Blood negative at start and end of season.**
- **Ongoing dead bird surveillance**
- **PHL capacity, recorded line maintained**
- **Ongoing educational presentations, especially to residents of south county.**
- **3 human cases, no deaths**



West Nile Epicenter: 2005

- February, 2005 first positive dead bird reported
- Press conference regarding funding for MVC districts, funding preserved
- Letter to physicians
- Letter to nursing homes, senior centers
- June, so many dead birds reported, not all will be tested
- Another insect repellent event in senior center
- Early July, positive mosquitoes found
- First human cases reported last week of July
- July 28 D.B. warns Citrus Heights City Council
- Testing done in PH lab, SYMVC tests in lab.
- 175 infections reported, 12 blood donors, 2 asymptomatic cases, one death
- CDI assigned full-time to WNV surveillance



August 2005

- **Thu. 4 SYMVC notifies us of decision to do aerial spraying based on human cases, dead birds and mosquito results**
- **Fri. 5 Town hall meeting at BOS. All public comments are negative. Some positive comments from audience members spoken privately.**
- **Mon. 8 First aerial spraying occurs**
- **Tue. 9 Appearance in Federal court with SYMVC followed by presentation to Sac. City Council.**
- **Number of cases reported average 18 a week**



August 2005

- **Frequent press conferences, presentations or answering questions regarding pesticides**
- **Stress levels rise for CD control staff due to number of telephone calls, e-mails and number of WNV cases to investigate, in addition to other normal duties**
- **PH lab postpones routine testing due to WNV testing load.**
- **WebvCMR implementation started in July, adds to stress**
- **Sacramento Bee publishes 46 articles about WNV in the month of August alone. Meeting media needs very time consuming.**



W. Nile kills Delta man

The Sacramento Bee, August 27, 2005

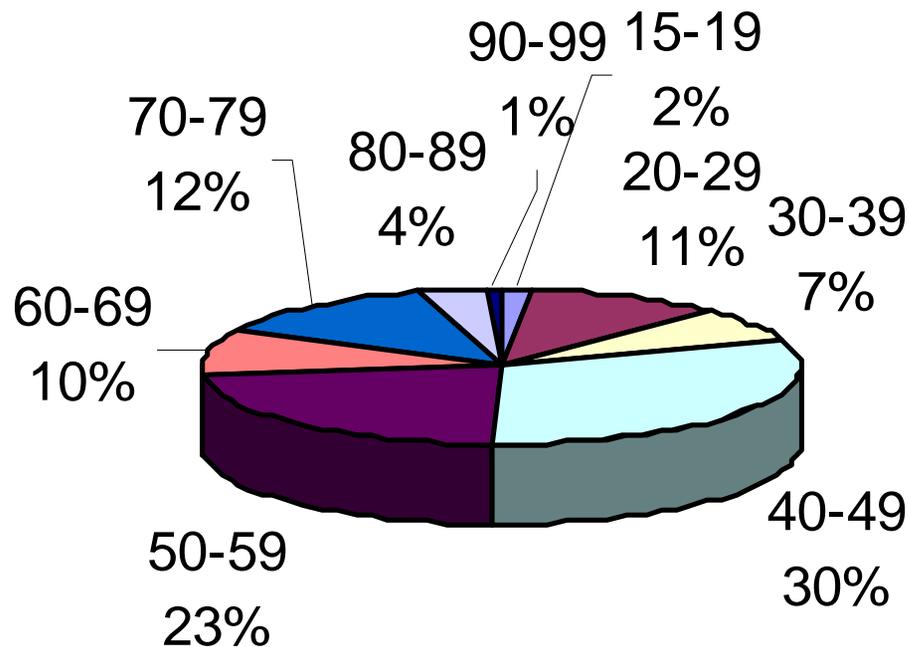
Family of first Sacramento County victim urges others to better protect themselves.

Rhetoric against spraying recedes



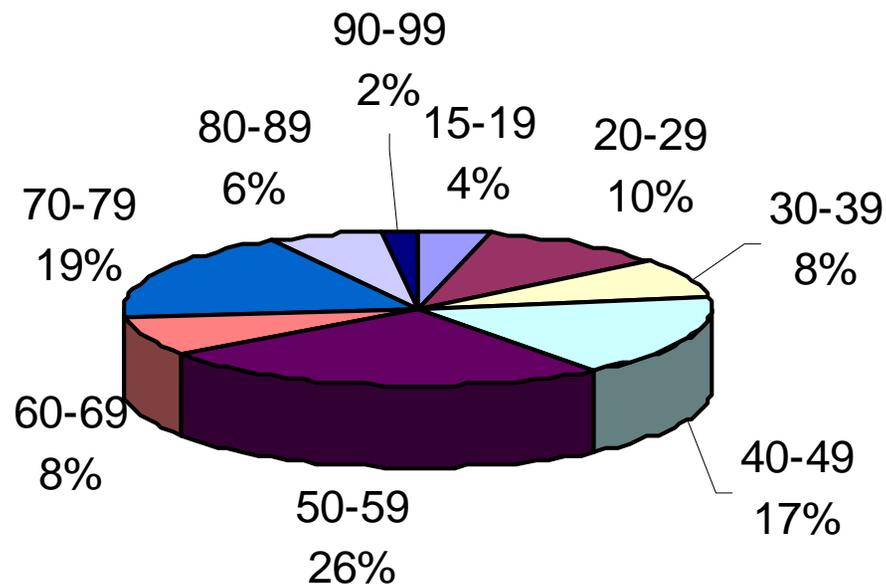
113 Cases of West Nile Fever

WNV Fever by age, Sacramento 2005

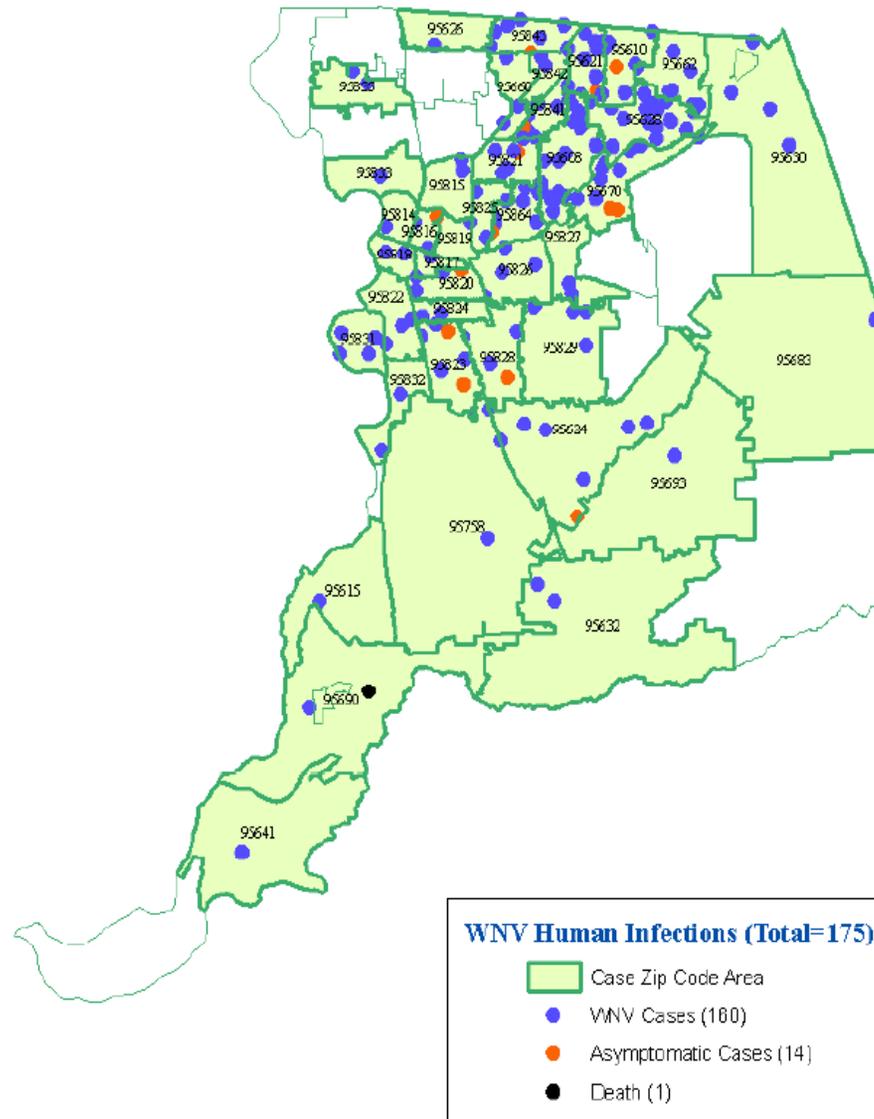


48 Cases of Neuroinvasive Disease

WNV Neuroinvasive Disease by Age, Sacramento County 2005



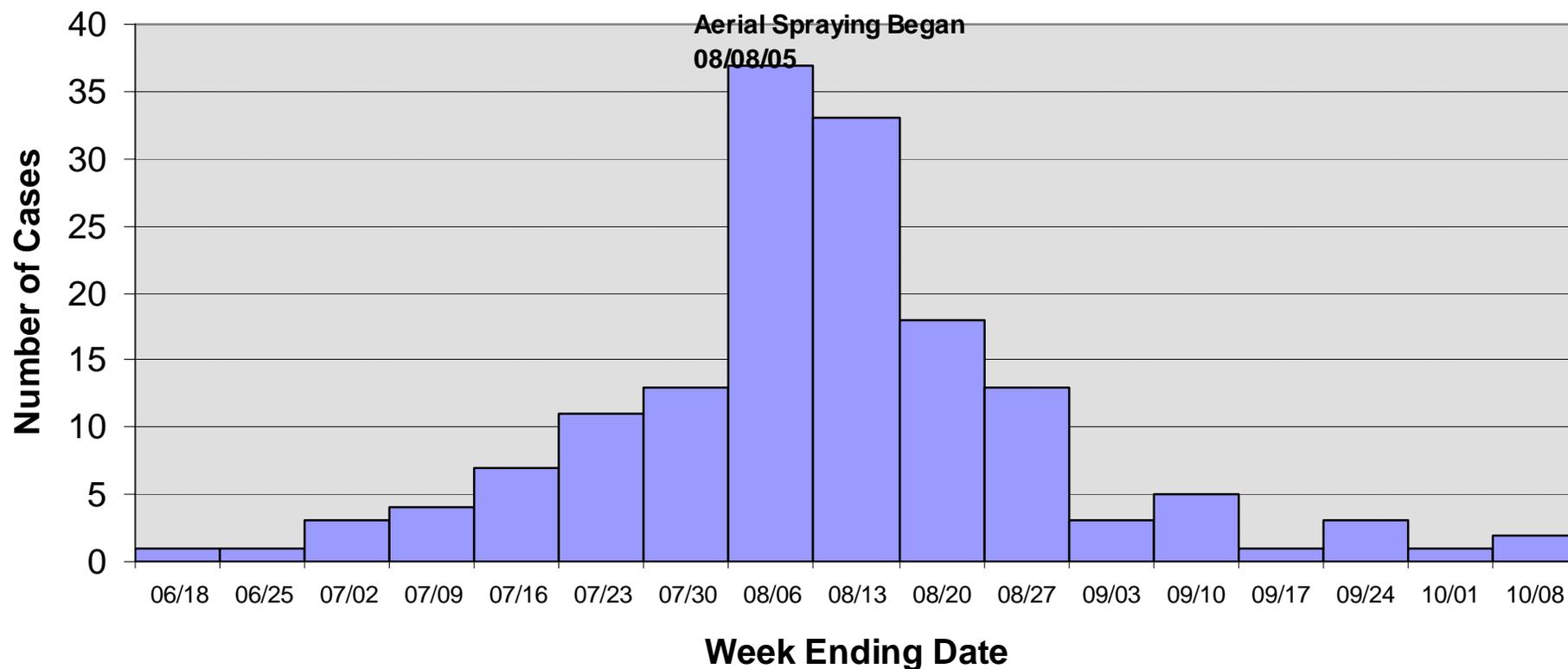
Sacramento County Human WNV Infections by Zip Code As of November 18, 2005



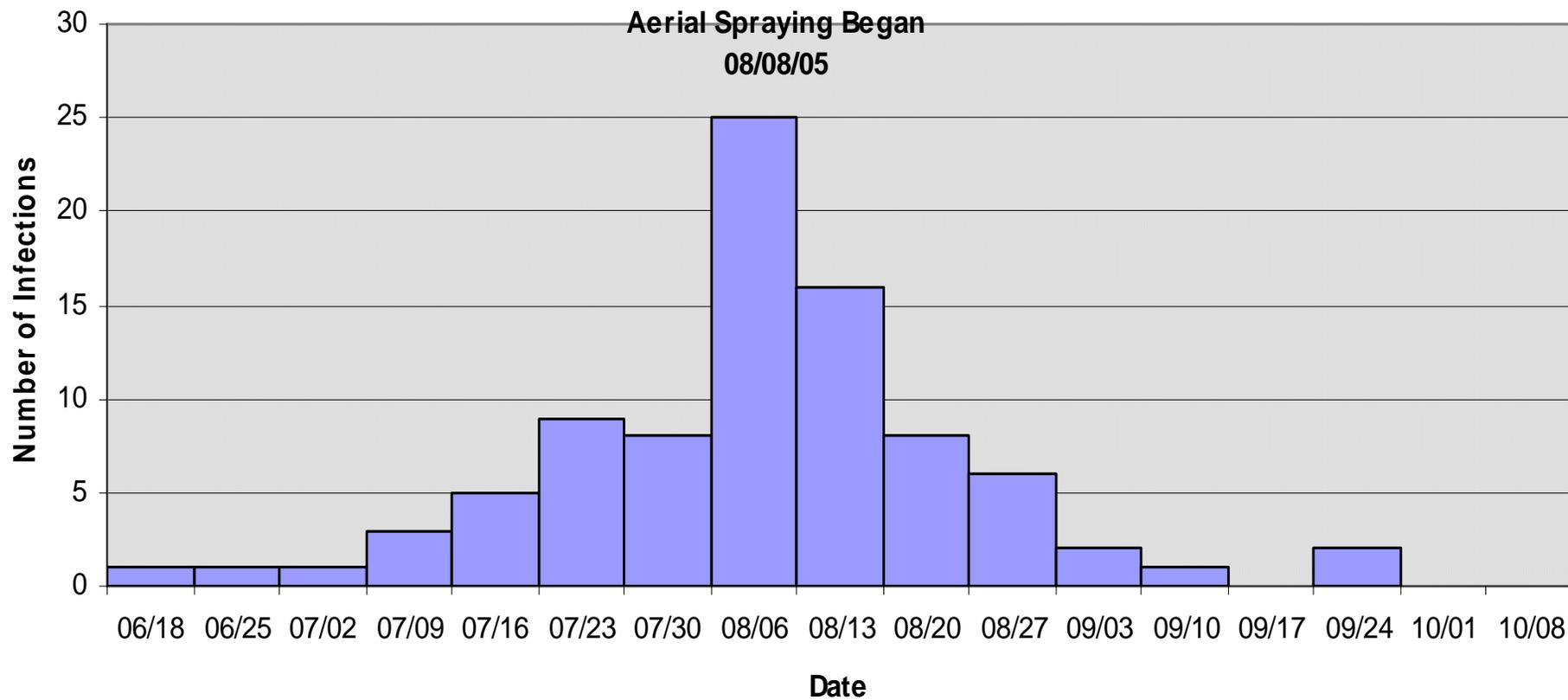
Note: Please note that the dots are randomly placed in the zip code for confidentiality reasons



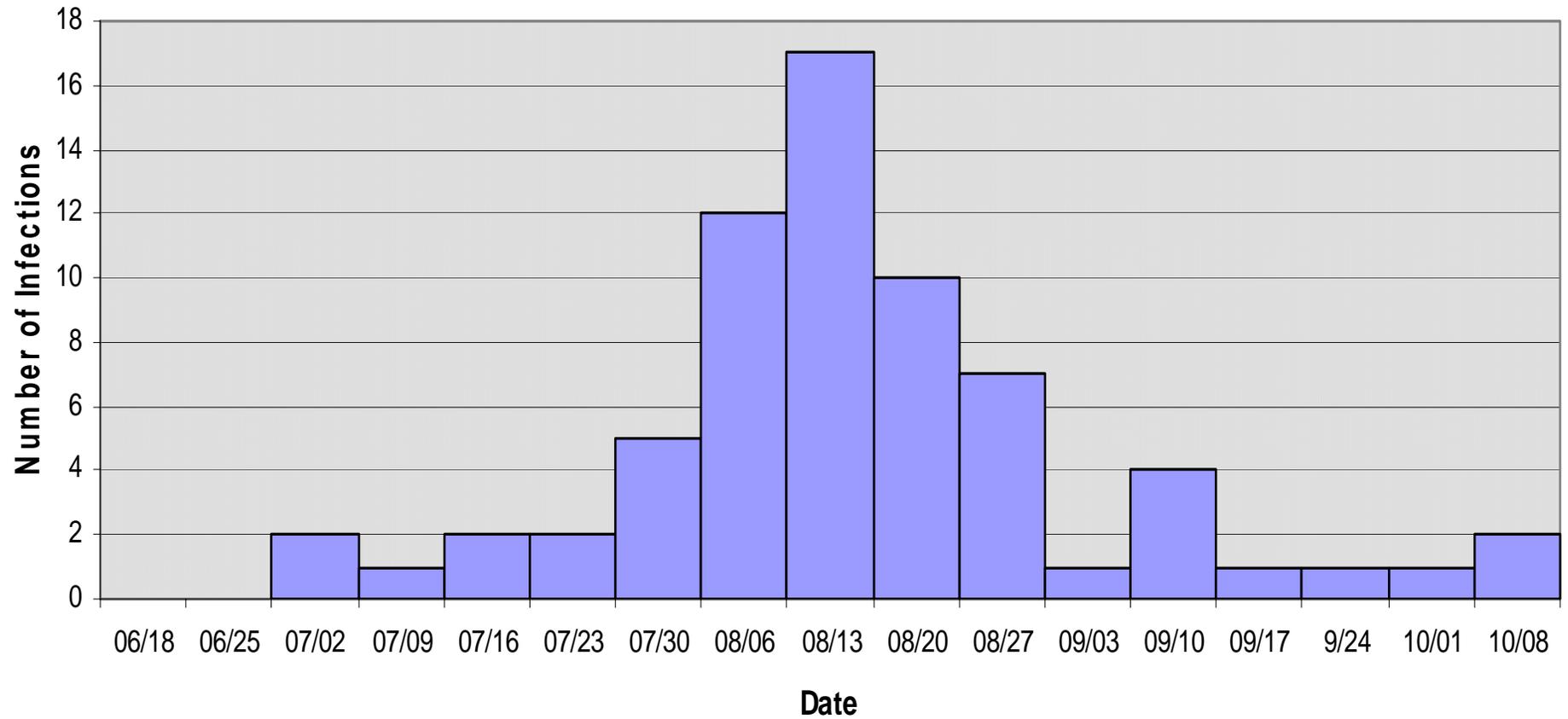
WNV Symptomatic Infections and Positive Blood Donors by Week of Onset Sacramento County 2005



WNV Symptomatic Infections and Positive Blood Donors by Week of Onset (North of American River) Sacramento County 2005



**WNV Symptomatic Infections and Positive Blood Donors by Week of Onset
(South of American River)
Sacramento County 2005**



Lessons Learned

- **Educational presentations: More drama needed.**
- **Actively seek and find those who may be opposed to an action early in the process and include them in the planning, if possible.**
- **Document activities performed.**
- **Staffing issues must be addressed, regardless of funding availability.**
- **Media access results in additional work load.**
- **Some people will not be convinced by the facts**

