



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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STATE HEALTH DIRECTOR ANNOUNCES SECOND CONFIRMED HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN CALIFORNIA THIS YEAR

SACRAMENTO - A Riverside County youth has been infected with West Nile virus (WNV), the second individual reported ill from the virus in California this year, State Health Director Sandra Shewry announced today. The youth, who began experiencing severe headaches and fever in mid-June, was hospitalized, but is recovering at home.

Yesterday, Shewry announced the first human WNV case in California, a 47-year-old Tulare County man who sought medical care for fever and headache in early June and is recovering.

"We anticipate seeing a rapid increase in West Nile virus activity over the next few weeks because the hot summer temperatures are here, providing perfect weather for mosquitoes to breed," Shewry said. "Californians need to take precautions to protect themselves, especially when they are enjoying outdoor activities over the Fourth of July holiday."

The Riverside County youth's infection was confirmed with tests conducted by the Public Health Laboratory in Riverside County and the California Department of Health Services' Viral and Rickettsial Disease Laboratory in Richmond.

The number of dead birds testing positive for WNV has jumped in California, with 109 birds statewide testing positive this week, compared with only 28 birds last week. So far this year, WNV has been detected in 34 of California's 58 counties in 258 dead birds, 41 mosquito pools, four sentinel chickens and three horses. In 2004, a total of 830 human WNV infections, including 28 deaths, were reported in California. WNV was detected in all counties last year and is expected to be detected statewide again this year.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's revised budget includes a new one-time \$12 million funding augmentation to supplement existing mosquito control programs.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Health officials emphasized that the risk of serious illness to humans is low. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Elderly individuals and those with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk for serious illness. The most effective ways for individuals to prevent WNV are:

- Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaradin or oil of lemon eucalyptus, according to label instructions.
- Ensure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding.

For more information about WNV and to report dead birds, visit www.westnile.ca.gov.