



## California West Nile Virus Home

- Home
- West Nile Basics
- Preventing West Nile Virus
- Identify and Report Dead Birds
- Maps and Data
- Educational Materials
- Press/Media
- Local Agencies
- Links

**Latest News**

Latest Department of Health Services Press Release

Latest WNV Activity

# West Nile Virus 2004

# Public Information and Education

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# Key messages

- **April**
  - **WNV has been detected in your area**
  - **CA surveillance system operating**
  - **Report dead birds**
  - **Take advised personal prevention measures**
  - **For horse owners, vaccinate your horses**

*(Above messages used consistently in updated press releases each month.)*



# Key messages

- **May**
  - **Observance of WNV Awareness Week  
May 3 -9, 2004**
  - **Release of “Fight the Bite” materials and PSAs**
  - **Examples of symptoms**



# Key messages

- **June**
    - **First human case**
    - **Announcement of additional state funding**
    - **Mid-June directed public to website for dead bird reporting, surveillance and prevention information**
- (Six counties had detected virus)*



# Key messages

- **July**
  - **First death**  
*(16 counties had detected virus)*
- **August**
  - **Peak mosquito time message**
  - **Strong emphasis on personal protective measures**  
*(48 counties had detected virus)*



# Key messages

- **September**
  - Directed public back to WNV hotline phone number as well as to website
  - CDC supplemental funding for phone, website, and public education announced
  - First northern California human death  
*(56 counties had detected virus)*
- **October**
  - 18<sup>th</sup> human death announced  
*(57 counties had detected virus)*



# Magnitude of Efforts

## Media: from April to November, 2004

- April: PSAs distributed to 350 radio stations and video PSAs went to major media outlets
- 11 press releases sent to 340 media outlets and public health departments
- Staff fielded 440 media calls and coordinated interviews
- 22 major print publications were monitored: 250 pertinent clips logged



# Magnitude of Efforts

## Public Education

- Local health departments, vector control and other public agencies customized and distributed “Fight the Bite” materials
  - 40,500 wallet cards in English and Spanish.
  - 15,000 posters
  - 40,000 door hangers
  - 132,000 postcards
  - 161,000 West Nile virus brochures



# Magnitude of Efforts

## Public Education

- California Walmarts ran continuous loop information videos in their stores.
  - Will continue in 2005
- In 2004, over 92,620 dead birds reported to WNV hotline and website
- Total hotline calls  $\geq$  120,000



# Issues and Challenges 2004

- Media
  - Requests for real-time statistics difficult to fulfill on a large-scale basis
- Public Education
  - Phone and website set-up for dead bird reporting and surveillance information
  - Limited resources for development and distribution of materials
  - Need for plain language brochure identified by state health educators



# Solutions to Issues and Challenges

- Media

- Biweekly updates on WNV surveillance information posted to: [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov) Tuesday and Friday by 2:00 p.m.



# Solutions to Issues and Challenges

- Public education
  - Informational messages added to hotline
  - Adapted Colorado's Fight the Bite materials to deliver an effective message in a timely manner
  - Added downloadable public education materials and pertinent links to website
  - 4<sup>th</sup> grade-level plain language brochure developed and translated by CDC for use in 2005
    - Translated into Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Hmong, Lao, Cambodian and Russian

# Outstanding Issues to Address Prior to 2005

- Media
  - Retag and duplicate PSAs
  - Schedule proactive media releases to follow 2004 message patterns, including requests for the public to report dead birds
- Public Education
  - Provide assistance to counties to incorporate messages that emphasize behavioral changes
    - Use DEET-based repellents
    - Drain standing water
  - Develop system for producing and distributing public education materials to counties with limited resources.