



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTY INTRODUCES MOBILE WEST NILE VIRUS WEBSITE *Get the Latest Updates, Protection/Prevention/Reporting Tips on Your Mobile Phone*

County Environmental Health officials announced Monday that local residents and visitors can now get the latest updates about the potentially-deadly West Nile virus on their mobile telephones, thanks to a new mobile website.

"We're doing everything we can to keep people informed and protected," said San Diego County Supervisor Greg Cox. "This new mobile website will let folks see --- right on their phones --- how to protect themselves, prevent the disease from spreading, report problems and help keep the lid on West Nile virus."

West Nile virus has been largely contained in San Diego County since it became a national concern in 1999, but the mosquito-borne disease remains a public-health threat. Last week, an elderly woman in Fresno died of West Nile virus complications, making her California's first West Nile virus fatality this year. There were four human cases and no deaths in San Diego County in 2009. There have been no human cases in the county to date in 2010. Nationwide, there have been 381 human cases and 12 deaths in 2010, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The County's new mobile website features the County Vector Control Program "Fight the Bite" logo, the latest information about the disease here in the county; quick facts, and "Prevent, Protect, Report" tips. The tips tell how people can protect themselves, prevent mosquitoes from breeding, and report dead birds and mosquito breeding grounds. The public can access the website at sdvector.mobi.

In April, the County introduced text alerts to warn residents about West Nile virus. By texting **PEST** to **75309** people can get information about where infected birds have been discovered, or tips about how to prevent spreading the disease. (Carrier text messaging fees apply.)

West Nile virus is primarily a bird disease, but can be transmitted to people by mosquitoes that feed on infected birds. The disease didn't appear in the U.S. until 1999, but then raced quickly across the country from the East Coast. West Nile virus was first detected in San Diego County in October 2003.

For more information about West Nile virus, the text alerts and the new mobile website, go to:

www.sdcounty.ca.gov/deh/pests/wnv.html. ###

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