



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Chris Conlan (858) 694-2137

Greg Slawson (858) 495-5358

WEST NILE VIRUS WEEKLY UPDATE *Another Five Dead Birds Test Positive for West Nile Virus*

County Vector Control officials announced today that an additional five dead birds tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV) during the past seven days, bringing this year's total to 44 positive birds, compared to only five positive birds at this time last year. The latest birds were all American Crows and were found in Carmel Valley, El Cajon, Solana Beach, and Mira Mesa.

"As the weather is heating up, so is West Nile Virus," said Gary Erbeck, Director of the County Department of Environmental Health. "Just this week, the first human case in California was reported. The best way to protect yourself from the virus is to avoid mosquito bites. Wear insect repellent when you go outside, and get rid of standing water near your home where mosquitoes can breed."

Prevent Mosquito Breeding: Backyard water sources are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Residents should dump or remove anything that can hold water, such as potted plants and saucers, rain gutters, buckets, trash cans, children's toys, old spare tires and wheelbarrows. Mosquito fish may be used to control mosquito breeding in backyard water sources such as unused swimming pools, ponds, fountains and horse troughs. The fish are available for free from the County.

Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites: You can protect yourself from the virus by staying inside when mosquitoes are most active and by wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors, especially at dawn or dusk. Use insect repellents containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus when you are outdoors. Keep screens on doors and windows, and make sure the screens are in good condition.

Report Mosquito Breeding and Dead Birds: County Vector Control staff continues to pick up and test dead crows, ravens, jays, hawks and owls that are reported. Call Vector Control for instructions on how to deal with the bird. Dead birds do not need to be reported if: they have been dead more than 24 hours; have been hit by a car, shot, or killed by animals; are covered with ants or flies; have a foul odor; or their bodies are not intact. To report dead birds or mosquito breeding areas, such as inoperative swimming pools or standing water, please call County Vector Control at 858-694-2888. For more information about West Nile virus, call 1-888-551-INFO (4636) or visit www.SDFightTheBite.com.

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