



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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TWO ADDITIONAL HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS CASES REPORTED

Case Count Rises to Nine; County Continues Surveillance

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) reports two more confirmed locally-acquired human cases of West Nile virus (WNV). The two new cases include:

- 56-year-old Del Mar man diagnosed with West Nile fever; not hospitalized
- 56-year-old La Mesa woman diagnosed with encephalitis; hospitalized and now in rehab

Seven other individuals throughout San Diego County were previously diagnosed with West Nile virus, bringing the year-to-date total to nine.

“Southern California is being hit hard by the virus this year,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “The first human WNV death for 2008 occurred this week in Orange County. The local dead bird count continues to rise, and as we know, that’s an indicator of WNV levels in a community. We urge the public to take appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of WNV, including using insect repellent and checking around their property for mosquito breeding sources.” In 2007, 15 people tested positive for locally-acquired WNV.

Precautions include using insect repellent when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active; using insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535; not sleeping outside, unprotected, while camping; wearing long sleeves and pants; and ensuring screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes or other damage.

Most people infected with WNV do not develop any symptoms or become seriously ill. Nearly one in five who do fall ill may suffer from headache, fever, nausea, fatigue, skin rash or swollen glands. The risk of complications increases for those over age 50. If you suspect you have WNV, contact your healthcare provider. If you have no healthcare provider, call HHSA’s Community Epidemiology Branch at (619) 515-6620.

HHSA is working closely with the County Department of Environmental Health (DEH), which continues its WNV control activities to check for and eradicate possible sources of the virus in San Diego County. A total of 318 dead birds and eight sentinel chickens have tested positive for WNV this year, one horse has died and 13 positive mosquito batches have been identified.

For more information or to report dead birds, please call the County’s WNV information line toll free at (888) 551-INFO (4636) or visit the County’s web site at www.SDFighttheBite.com. ###