



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION
Sept. 16, 2008

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WEST NILE VIRUS WEEKLY UPDATE ***Human Cases Rise to 14; Bird Cases to 411; Horse Deaths to Two***

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HSA), County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, and County Veterinarian's Office report two confirmed locally-acquired human cases of West Nile virus (WNV), one horse death, one infected horse, 31 dead birds, and five positive batches of mosquitoes. **The reporting period is from Sept. 8 to Sept. 14, 2008.**

A 53-year-old Del Mar woman has been diagnosed with WNV disease; she was not hospitalized, and is improving. A 64-year-old El Cajon woman also has been diagnosed with WNV disease; she was hospitalized, has been discharged and is improving.

A second horse infected with WNV has died. The horse had not been vaccinated for WNV for more than two years. The horse lived in the Lakeside area and had not traveled outside the county. The third horse, which lives in the Encanto area, also had not been vaccinated. It is expected to recover.

The positive mosquitoes and 24 American Crows, two Sparrows, two Western Scrub Jays, one Barn Owl, one Common Raven and one Western Bluebird were found in Alpine, Bonita, Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Clairemont, El Cajon, Encinitas, Escondido, Julian, La Jolla, La Mesa, Lakeside, Mira Mesa, Oceanside, Poway, Ramona, Rolando, San Marcos, Scripps Ranch, Solana Beach, Torrey Pines and Vista.

2008 to-date case counts include:

- 14 human cases
 - 13 locally-acquired cases
 - 1 non-locally-acquired case
- 411 dead birds
- 10 positive sentinel chickens
- 2 horse deaths
- 1 infected horse
- 26 positive mosquito batches

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County Veterinarian Dr. Nikos Gurfield urges all horse owners to have their horses vaccinated. Signs of WNV in horses include stumbling, weakness, muscle twitching, fever, aimless wandering or inability to stand. Contact your veterinarian immediately if your horse has any of these symptoms.

Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H, County of San Diego Public Health Officer, and Gary Erbeck, Director, County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, urge the public to take the following steps to protect themselves against WNV:

- Use insect repellent when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active
- Use insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535
- Do not sleep outside, unprotected, while camping; wear long sleeves and pants
- Ensure screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes or other damage.
- Check your property weekly for mosquito breeding sources; go to www.SDFighttheBite.com for a mosquito prevention checklist
- Report green pools to County Vector Control

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. Approximately one in 150 people infected with WNV develop more serious neurological effects such as meningitis, encephalitis or myelitis. If you suspect you have WNV, contact your healthcare provider.

For more information or to report dead birds or green pools, please call the County's WNV information line toll free at (888) 551-INFO (4636).

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