

## **GROUND SQUIRRELS ON PALOMAR MOUNTAIN TEST POSITIVE FOR PLAGUE**

Two ground squirrels at the Doane Valley Campground on Palomar Mountain tested positive for plague during routine surveillance by the Department of Environmental Health. Flea control measures have been instituted and plague warning signs have been posted. Plague has occasionally been found in the higher elevations of San Diego County and was found in the same park on Palomar Mountain last year.

To date, there have been no reports of locally-acquired human plague in San Diego County. However, the summer weather will likely prompt more camping and hiking among residents and visitors. Healthcare providers are encouraged to consider plague in patients presenting with acute onset of fever, chills, and lymphadenopathy (bubo), particularly in the groin, axilla or cervical region, and a history of visiting, hiking or camping in the rural mountainous areas of the western United States, including San Diego County, within 2-8 days of symptom onset.

Suspect and confirmed cases should be reported immediately to the Community Epidemiology Branch at 619-515-6620 (or 858-565-5255 after hours). Suspected isolates of *Yersinia pestis*, the bacterium that causes plague, should be forwarded to the San Diego County Public Health Laboratory (619-692-8500) for rapid identification or rule out.

For additional information about plague, please visit the CDC website at:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/plague/index.asp>

For information about local plague surveillance, please contact County Vector Control at (858) 694-2888 or visit <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/deh/pests/plague.html>

Thank you for your continued participation.

Emergency Medical Alert Network (EMAN)  
County of San Diego, Health & Human Services Agency  
Community Epidemiology Branch