

## Help Fight The West Nile Virus

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers on your property. Other sources of standing water around your home that can support mosquito breeding such as: water in old tires, buckets, plastic covers, or toys. Mosquitoes can breed in any water more than four days old.
- Empty & change the water in birdbaths, fountains, wading pools, rain barrels, wheelbarrows, pet food, water dishes, & potted plant trays at least once a week.
- Clean clogged roof gutters every year.
- Replace your outdoor lights with yellow “bug” lights.
- Check around faucets and air conditioner units. Repair any leaks.
- Clean & chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas & hot tubs. Keep swimming pool covers clean.
- Stock ponds with mosquito eating fish. The County of San Diego, Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures will help supply mosquito eating fish.

Call 1-858-694-2739 or [www.sdcounty.ca.gov/awm/](http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/awm/)

- Use long sleeves, long pants, socks and closed shoes if you venture outside during dawn, dusk and early evening hours.
- Make sure window and door screens are “bug tight.” Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Use mosquito repellants containing “DEET” when necessary and follow label directions and precautions closely.
- A limited control program is available for adult mosquitoes. Call Aardvark Ant and Pest Control, Inc., for more information 1-800-650-6008.

## What is West Nile Virus?

WNV encephalitis is a mosquito-borne viral disease, which can cause an inflammation of the brain. It is a virus carried by certain species of mosquitoes that pick it up after biting infected birds. Occasionally, mosquitoes may also transmit the virus by biting humans and other mammals.

## How is WNV Spread?

WNV is spread to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito. A mosquito becomes infected by biting a bird that carries the virus. The virus cannot be passed from person to person.

## Symptoms of WNV

- If a human is infected with the virus, it multiplies in the person's blood system & crosses the blood-brain barrier to reach the brain (inflammation). Flu like symptoms can occur, fever, headache & body aches, occasionally with skin rash & swollen lymph glands, although some people have no symptoms.
- A little goes a long way. Aim for ankles, back of the neck and arms.
- Don't spray repellent onto your face. Put a little repellent on the hands and then apply to the face, avoiding the eyes and mouth.
- Don't put "DEET" products on children's hands. Children often put their hands into their mouths and eyes.
- DEET will not hurt cotton or linen, but it could damage synthetic fabrics.
- Repellent with "DEET" lasts about 10 hours and can be washed off with soap and water.
- For people who want to avoid "DEET" based repellents, there are some plant-derived repellents that work too. Products that contain 2-phenethyl propionate must be reapplied every two-three hours.
- Other alternatives: plant oils such as those from birch, bluestem grass, geranium, pine, rosemary, spearmint, yarrow, lantana and neem have been shown to be somewhat repellent to mosquitoes, but most are not available in commercial mosquito repellents.
- Avon's Skin So Soft is a moisturizer that gained fame as a bug fighter through word of mouth. One interesting note: The product is effective, but not because of the smell. It creates a physical barrier that mosquitoes cannot bite through!
- WNV has been shown to infect dogs, cats, bats, chipmunks, skunks, squirrels and domestic birds and rabbits. The virus has rarely caused illnesses in these animals.
- Pet Owners should NOT use human repellents that contain "DEET" on animals. Check with your veterinarian for the appropriate products to protect your pet. Also contact your veterinarian if your pet shows signs of WNV infection, such as fever, depression, lack of coordination, muscle weakness, spasms, seizures or paralysis.
- Vaccinate your horses. In a reported dated June 4 2004, 5000 horses tested positive for WNV n 2003.

### Additional Resources:

EPA: "How to Use Insect Repellent Use and Safety"

CDC: "Insect Repellent Use and Safety"

For more information about WNV in California or to report

## In The News

On July 12, 2004, the County of San Diego, Department of Health issued a News Release advising that the County of San Diego Vector Control Program is conducting monthly West Nile Virus aerial mosquito larvicide application to key local area wetlands listing: Mission Trails Park, Kumeyaay Lake Campground on Father Juniper Sierra Trail (West of Mission Gorge Road. (Thomas Brothers 1230-G6)).

July 21, 2004 – Marin Independent Journal - Arcadia – “The West Nile virus that has infected more than two dozen people and nearly a thousand birds in Southern California since June has begun moving into the regions most populous areas...so far, 28, people, 26 horses and about 950 birds have been diagnosed with the disease in Southern California this year. California had 3 cases in 2003.

July 22, 2004 – News Release – California Department of Health – “State Public Health Officer announces California’s First Death from West Nile Virus.” WNV claimed the life of a 57 – year – old Orange County man, making him the first to die in California from the virus and another death in San Bernadino on July 31, 2004.

July 22, 2004 – SignOnSanDiego.com “There have now been 40 human cases of West Nile statewide this year and the virus has now been detected in 16 of California’s 58 counties...It appeared in the state last year for the first time. The state health agency Thursday added eight new counties to its list of locations where birds have tested positive for West Nile: Butte, Kings, Mendocino, Sacramento, San Diego, San Joaquin, Tehama and Tulare. San Diego County added its first case Thursday after officials confirmed that a dead Cooper’s Hawk found in a Carlsbad yard July 4 test positive for the virus.”