



Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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West Nile Virus Continues to be Detected in Inyo County

The Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program (OVMAP) confirmed today that one additional mosquito sample trapped last week tested positive for West Nile virus. This is the fifth positive sample detected in Inyo County during the 2017 mosquito season. Statewide, 1,470 total positive samples have been confirmed.

West Nile virus has been detected periodically in the Owens Valley after first being discovered in our area in 2004. "For every 100 people who are bitten by a West Nile virus-carrying mosquito, only 20 are at risk of contracting West Nile virus, and of those, fewer than 1% are likely to experience life-threatening reactions" according to Inyo County Health Officer, Dr. James Richardson. Nevertheless, the public is urged to take precautions discussed below.

While horses are more at risk for contracting the disease, vaccines are available and horse owners are urged to get their horses vaccinated. For more information, please contact your veterinarian.

According to OVMAP Interim Manager Rob Miller, the positive sample was collected to the east of Lone Pine and is the first positive sample collected from the Lone Pine area this season. Positive samples have been previously detected in the Bishop area this season.

Miller said, nearby source areas and the community of Lone Pine were treated with an adulticide application following trapping activities. This eradication effort has already resulted in significant decreases in the number of mosquitos in this area.

About 20% of those who are bit by an infected mosquito will experience flu-like symptoms that last a few days and resolve on their own. Over-the-counter pain medications can help reduce fever and relieve some of the symptoms. About 1 out of every 150 people who contract West Nile virus will develop more serious neurologic illness. If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to seek medical attention if they develop symptoms commonly associated with WNV.

With ongoing indications of West Nile virus carting mosquitos in the Owens Valley, the public is

encouraged to prevent mosquito bites by:

- **Using mosquito repellent.** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends using insect repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or IR3535. Some oil of Lemon eucalyptus and Para-Menthane-Diol products provide similar protection.
- **Avoiding outdoor activities if possible during dawn and dusk.** This is especially important during the first two hours following sunset, when species that spread West Nile virus are actively biting.
- **Wearing long sleeves and pants.** This provides additional protection when used in conjunction with insect repellent

To find more information on West Nile virus, visit the Centers for Disease Control WNV page at <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>, or the California West Nile virus website at <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>.

Please report mosquito problems to the Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program by calling: (760) 873-7853.