



Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program

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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Another West Nile Virus Sample Tests Positive in the Owens Valley

The Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program (OVMAP) confirmed today that another mosquito sample tested positive for West Nile virus. This sample was collected in an area outside of Bishop on August 15. This is the sixth positive sample detected in Inyo County during the 2017 mosquito season. Rob Miller of OVMAP stated that “West Nile virus finds can peak as late as mid-September in California, and it is possible we could find positive mosquitos into the fall”.

West Nile virus had not been detected in the Owens Valley in several years. An eradication effort in the area where the positive sample was obtained has already begun. High runoff conditions jump-started a very active mosquito breeding season this year, while creating many inaccessible areas of mosquito habitat. This has taxed OVMAP resources tremendously in 2017, resulting in a July 28 request by the mosquito control agency to the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) for assistance in managing mosquito populations in areas where LADWP has spread vast amounts of water. LADWP committed to helping the residents of the Owens Valley with this issue during the August 15 Inyo County Board of Supervisors Meeting.

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 carrying 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.