



Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program

207 West South Street
Bishop, CA 93514
760.873.7853

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2017

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nate Reade, Inyo-Mono Agricultural Commissioner
(760)-873-7860

Dr. James Richardson, Inyo County Health Officer
(760) 920-0433

Anna Scott, Inyo County Public Health Director
(760)-873-7868

West Nile virus Found in Samples of Mosquitos Trapped in Inyo County

The Owens Valley Mosquito Abatement Program (OVMAP) confirmed today that some mosquito samples trapped last week tested positive for West Nile virus. This is the first occurrence of West Nile virus in Inyo County since 2011. Prior to that, West Nile virus had been detected periodically in the Owens Valley after first being discovered in our area in 2004. During that period, no human infections were reported, but 3 horses died after being infected with West Nile virus.

The three positive samples in Inyo County come during the same week that 214 samples were positive for the disease statewide.

“For every 100 people who are bitten by a West Nile virus-carrying mosquito, only 20 are 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.

Likewise, 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 samples were collected to the southeast of Bishop, in the same trap location that West Nile virus has been found in prior years”.

Miller said, this area was heavily treated with an adulticide application following trapping activities due to high adult mosquito populations in the area. This eradication effort has already resulted in significant decreases in the number of mosquitos in this area.

According to Agricultural Commissioner Nate Reade, “crews will continue to aggressively treat this area until trap results show diminished population levels”.

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.

While this discovery does not indicate a human case of West Nile virus, it does emphasize the importance of protecting yourself against 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.