



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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East Side

Mosquito Abatement Districts Begin Mosquito Control Operations to Protect the Public from West Nile Virus in Stanislaus County

STANISLAUS COUNTY – Stanislaus County health officials are announcing that the East Side and Turlock Mosquito Abatement Districts (Districts) are beginning surveillance and control operations for mosquitoes that might be carrying West Nile Virus (WNV). The Districts are targeting residential backyard sources such as neglected swimming pools and ornamental ponds. The Districts will be using aerial photography to assist in locating potential mosquito breeding sites.

According to Lloyd Douglass, Manager of East Side Mosquito Abatement District (MAD), "Over 1,100 backyards were found breeding mosquitoes in Stanislaus County last year. We anticipate finding just as many this year. The kind of mosquitoes found breeding in backyards are the same species that are responsible for infecting people with WNV. West Nile Virus is here to stay and we expect to see WNV activity again this year." Last year 17 people in Stanislaus County were infected with WNV and many who were infected continue to have side effects.

Last year the public was instrumental in locating backyard sources by reporting suspected breeding locations to the Districts. The Districts are recommending that property owners take responsibility for maintaining their swimming pools and ornamental ponds to prevent mosquito breeding. The public is asked to notify the Districts of any suspected or known neglected swimming pools. Mosquito fish are also available upon request. According to Turlock MAD Manager Jerry Davis, "The Districts are more concerned about controlling mosquitoes in backyards than requiring the owner to pay for the cost of control."

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To Prevent Mosquito Bites:

Insect repellent should be applied anytime you go outside, but it is especially important when mosquitoes are most active just after sundown and just after sunrise. To be effective, repellent should contain DEET, Picaridin, or oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. When outdoors, wear long sleeves and pants, and other protective clothing to prevent mosquito bites.

To Eliminate Mosquito-Breeding Grounds:

Keeping your property free of standing water is a sure way of eliminating mosquito breeding. Some examples include: Not over-watering your lawn or garden; changing water in pet dishes and bird baths on a regular basis; and dumping any standing water out of backyard toys, flower pots and garbage cans.

To report mosquito breeding problems, Stanislaus County residents should contact one of the two mosquito abatement districts that serve the county. Residents with addresses north of the Tuolumne River should call the Eastside Mosquito Abatement District at 522-4098 and all others should contact the Turlock Mosquito Abatement District at 634-1234.

For more information, call the West Nile virus hotline at (209) 558-8425 to hear recorded information in both English and Spanish. You can also visit www.stanemergency.com for WNV information. The website includes maps showing locations of WNV-infected mosquito samples, dead birds, and horses.

The State of California is still requesting that residents of Stanislaus County report dead birds to the state hotline at 1-877-WNV-BIRD. Birds of particular interest to the state are crows, ravens, magpies, jays and raptors (hawk or eagle). The public may also submit the information via the web site www.westnile.ca.gov.

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