



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION
Sept. 23, 2008

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WEST NILE VIRUS WEEKLY UPDATE ***Human Cases Rise to 18; Bird Cases to 425; County Continues Surveillance***

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), and the County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control report four new confirmed locally-acquired human cases of West Nile virus (WNV), 14 dead birds, three positive sentinel chickens, and six positive batches of mosquitoes. **The reporting period is from Sept. 15 to Sept. 21, 2008.**

Cases include:

- 49-year-old Ramona woman diagnosed with encephalitis
- 76-year-old University City man diagnosed with meningitis
- 14-year-old Carmel Valley boy diagnosed with West Nile fever
- 3-year-old Tierrasanta boy diagnosed with meningitis

The 49-year-old and 76-year-old were hospitalized and discharged, and are improving. The 14-year-old and 3-year-old were not hospitalized, and are improving.

The sentinel chickens, mosquitoes and dead birds including 11 American crows, two Western Scrub Jays and one Western Screech Owl were found in Alpine, Bay Park, Bonita, Carlsbad, Carmel Valley, Clairemont, Encinitas, Escondido, Fallbrook, Julian, Lakeside, Mira Mesa, Oceanside, Ramona, Sorrento Valley, Tijuana River Valley and the UTC area.

Total human case count for 2007 was 15. 2008 to-date case counts include:

- 18 human cases
 - 17 locally-acquired cases
 - 1 non-locally-acquired case
- 425 dead birds
- 13 positive sentinel chickens
- 2 horse deaths
- 1 infected horse
- 32 positive mosquito batches

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Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H, County of San Diego Public Health Officer, and Gary Erbeck, Director, County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, urge the public to take the following steps to protect themselves against WNV:

- Use insect repellent when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active
- Use insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535
- Do not sleep outside, unprotected, while camping; wear long sleeves and pants
- Ensure screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes or other damage.
- Check your property weekly for mosquito breeding sources; go to www.SDFighttheBite.com for a mosquito prevention checklist
- Report green pools to County Vector Control

Most people infected with WNV do not develop any symptoms or become seriously ill. Nearly one in five who do fall ill may suffer from headache, fever, nausea, fatigue, skin rash or swollen glands. Approximately one in 150 people infected with WNV develop more serious neurological effects such as meningitis, encephalitis or myelitis. If you suspect you have WNV, contact your healthcare provider.

For more information or to report dead birds or green pools, please call the County's WNV information line toll free at (888) 551-INFO (4636).

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