



**Greater Los Angeles County
Vector Control District**
12545 Florence Ave.
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(562) 944-9656

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Stephanie Miladin
Public Information Officer
(562) 944-6789
E-mail: smiladin@glacvcd.org

More West Nile Virus Positive Mosquitoes

More West Nile virus positive mosquitoes were collected by the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District (GLACVCD) on June 15 and 16, and confirmed positive for West Nile virus on Friday, July 2, 2004 by the California Department of Health Services (DHS) and the UC Davis arbovirus diagnostic laboratory. Nine more West Nile virus positive mosquito pools have been confirmed within the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District, totaling 30 for the year. A mosquito "pool" is a vial with 10-50 live anesthetized female mosquitoes sent to CA DHS for testing.

The most recent infected mosquitoes, all *Culex quinquefasciatus* species or Southern house mosquitoes, were collected near waterway systems from Los Angeles City near Griffith Park along the L.A. River (1 pool), Pico Rivera (4 pools), Long Beach (2 pools), La Mirada (1 pool), and Lakewood (1 pool). The Southern house mosquito is the most common mosquito species in Los Angeles County.

To better safeguard the public's health, GLACVCD will be posting West Nile virus warning signs in the following areas: El Dorado Regional and Hartwell Park in Long Beach, and the east side of Griffith Park in Los Angeles City. The San Gabriel River corridor was posted in May from past West Nile virus positive mosquitoes. Warning signs are only posted at recreational areas such as parks and golf courses where people might be active at dawn or dusk, the same time mosquitoes are most active and asking people to take precautions.

West Nile virus spreads when mosquitoes bite infected birds and consequently transmit the virus to humans and animals through future bites and is not spread by person-person contact or directly from birds to humans. While there is no evidence that people can get the virus from handling live or dead birds, individuals should not attempt to catch or handle live, sick birds.

Approximately 80% of people who are infected with West Nile virus experience no symptoms. Of the 20% who become ill, symptoms may include fever, headache, nausea, skin, rash, and/or swollen lymph nodes. Initially, these symptoms were considered mild and not long lasting, but in recent findings, symptoms can last up to three weeks or longer and may lead to permanent neurological damage. It is estimated that 1 in 150 people who are infected will require hospitalization with intensive supportive therapy.

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Residents can protect themselves and their family by playing an active role in mosquito prevention by doing the following:

- Mosquitoes breed in standing water. Eliminate standing water on your property by dumping or draining water in neglected swimming pools, ponds, rain barrels, discarded tires, buckets, or anything holding water for more than a few days. This will stop the mosquito life cycle.
- Wear loose, light colored, long sleeve shirts and pants outdoors, especially at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Use mosquito repellent containing DEET.
- Keep tight fitting screens on doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering homes.

To find out more, visit www.wipeoutwestnile.com or www.glacvcd.org.

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