

SHASTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

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West Nile Virus Remains a Serious Threat in Shasta County as Summer Months Approach

Above average precipitation, coupled with summer rapidly approaching means that District residents need to be aware of the serious risk West Nile virus (WNV) presents to their health. Since early February, District personnel have been monitoring mosquito populations, disease occurrence and treating areas of standing water to prevent mosquito breeding with mosquito control products and mosquito fish.

To raise awareness and educate Californians about the threat mosquitoes and vectors pose to our community, the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District, the City of Anderson, the City of Shasta Lake, the City of Redding, the Shasta County Board of Supervisors and the California Legislature declared April 17th-23rd, 2016 as West Nile virus and Mosquito and Vector Control Week.

“Although diseases like Zika have received a lot of attention, West Nile virus continues to be a major threat and the primary focus of our public health interventions for 2016,” said District Manager Peter Bonkrude. “The immediate impact of these emerging diseases for us in Shasta County is the recognition that a well organized and funded mosquito and vector control program can be proactive in protecting residents from any new vector-borne disease that may appear.”

The ongoing drought has posed an increased risk for mosquito transmitted diseases. As Shasta County slowly recovers from years of below average precipitation, the threat of West Nile virus and other mosquito borne diseases is still present. Last year, the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (SMVCD) confirmed a record number of mosquitoes samples (48) tested positive for West Nile virus. Additionally, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) confirmed 783 cases of WNV in California. Of these, 544 developed the more severe neuroinvasive form of the disease resulting in 53 fatalities statewide.

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Our Mission: “To protect the public’s health from vector-borne disease and nuisance, through a comprehensive mosquito and vector control program focused on innovation, experience and efficiency”.

SMVCD is charged with protecting the health of our residents from mosquito and vector-borne diseases, but they cannot do it alone. SMVCD staff urges residents to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites; reducing activity during the peak mosquito feeding times at dawn and dusk, wearing effective insect repellent, and staying behind screened windows and doors whenever possible.

The Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District advises the public to implement the **4 Ds** of protection:

- **D**rain any standing water that may produce mosquitoes, this includes flower pots, old tires, and buckets. Some species of mosquitoes can lay their eggs in very small sources of water, like a bottle cap.
- **D**efend yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent and dressing protectively when outside and making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- **D**usk or Dawn avoid outside activities
- **D**ress in long sleeves and pants when mosquitoes are active.

For more information about SMVCD's services, West Nile virus or new emerging mosquito borne diseases like Zika virus, contact the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District at (530) 365-3768 or visit www.shastamosquito.org

2015 Shasta County West Nile virus activity: **15** dead birds, **18** sentinel chickens, **48** mosquito samples, and **3** humans tested positive for West Nile virus.

2016 Shasta County West Nile virus activity update: **0** dead birds, **0** sentinel chickens, **0** mosquito samples, and **0** humans have tested positive for West Nile virus. Statewide virus activity update: **12** dead birds, **0** sentinel chickens, **0** mosquito samples, and **0** humans have tested positive for West Nile virus to 4/8/2016.