



Shasta County West Nile Virus Task Force  
 Contact: John Albright at 365-3768  
 Lou Anne Cummings at 225-5591

Blood Source Northstate

Burney Basin Mosquito Abatement  
 District

California Department of Food and  
 Agriculture, division of Animal Health

Calif. Dept. of Public Health  
 Vector Borne Disease Section

Haven Humane

Northern California Veterinary  
 Medical Association

Pine Grove Abatement District

Redding Animal Regulation

Shasta County:

- Administrative Office
- Agriculture Commissioner
- Department of Resource  
 Management, division of  
 Environmental Health
- Public Health
- Sheriff's Animal Regulation

Shasta Blood Center

Shasta Mosquito and Vector  
 Control District

Shasta Wildlife Rescue and  
 Rehabilitation

## NEWS RELEASE

**June 22, 2009**

### **DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN SHASTA COUNTY**

*Shasta County Has Done Much To Prepare*

Shasta County, CA – A dead savannah sparrow retrieved by the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (MVCD) was tested at U.C. Davis and confirmed to be positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). The sparrow was found June 4 in North Redding.

“The dead bird find is an early indicator that we are heading into West Nile Virus season, and people need to prevent mosquito bites,” said John Albright of the Shasta MVCD. The virus was introduced into Shasta County by birds and is transmitted from the birds to humans by mosquitoes. The three mosquito abatement districts in Shasta County continue to use a variety of vector control strategies to reduce mosquito populations in inhabited areas.

West Nile Virus has infected at least one person in Shasta County every year since 2004. West Nile Virus can be serious, and during the summer and fall, Shasta County residents need to remember to make effective mosquito repellent a part of their regular outdoor routine.

“West Nile Virus disease is rare, but if you have symptoms including high fever, severe headache and stiff neck, contact your health care provider immediately,” said Lou Anne Cummings, MD, MPH, Deputy Health Officer for Shasta County Public Health. “We need to put West Nile Virus prevention into our normal, everyday routine.”

The best way to avoid becoming sick from the virus is to prevent mosquito bites. The most important things that individuals can do are described as the Four Ds:

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Dedicated to protecting Shasta County from West Nile Virus

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- DRAIN standing water around the house weekly since it's where mosquitoes lay eggs, including tires, cans, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles.
- DUSK & DAWN are when mosquitoes that carry the virus are most active, so limit outdoor activities or take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.
- DEET is an effective ingredient to look for in insect repellants. Always follow label instructions carefully.
- DRESS in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

Three other mosquito repellants besides DEET are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for use as repellants on skin and clothing: Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and IR3535. Always follow instructions on containers carefully.

“West Nile Virus has been found in all regions of Shasta County in past years. All residents and visitors need to take extra precautions against mosquito bites,” said John Albright. “At least once a week, it's important to empty containers around the house that may collect water such as buckets, flower pots and old tires.”

Of special concern are the high numbers of foreclosed homes with pools. Real estate managers or others who regularly access unoccupied and for-sale homes can help eliminate standing water. Anything that will hold water for more than a few days can breed mosquitoes.

If there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work in Shasta County, contact Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (serving limited areas of the greater Redding area) at 365-3768, the Burney Mosquito Abatement District (serving Burney Basin) at 335-2133, or the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District (serving Fall River Valley) at 336-5740.

Residents are encouraged to help track West Nile Virus by reporting recently dead birds to the State hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or visit the website at <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>. Though not all birds can be picked up for testing, all calls are important to help track West Nile Virus in our area. Dead birds should be picked up with a plastic bag and not touched.

While West Nile Virus infection can be fatal to horses, vaccinations for horses are available. Horse owners should contact a veterinarian immediately to discuss this preventive measure. The timing of the vaccine is critical because it must be administered prior to disease exposure.

For more information about human disease, contact Shasta County Public Health at 225-5591 during regular business hours or visit [www.shastapublichealth.net](http://www.shastapublichealth.net).

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### **For more information on West Nile Virus:**

#### **Shasta County Public Health:**

*General information about WNV human infection, educational materials and references to other resources:*

Web Site: [www.shastapublichealth.net](http://www.shastapublichealth.net)

Health Information Line: (530) 229-8461

#### **Local Mosquito and Vector Control Districts:**

*For information about spraying insecticide and Mosquito activity surveillance efforts in your area contact:*

Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (serving limited areas of the greater Redding area) at (530) 365-3768

Web Site: <http://www.shastamosquito.org/>

Burney Mosquito Abatement District (serving Burney Basin) at 335-2133

Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District (serving Fall River Valley) at 336-5740

#### **California Department of Public Health**

*General information about WNV and human infection, most recent press release, current number of cases in California, and to report a dead bird:*

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday – Friday

General Information: (866) 847-2246

To Report Dead Birds: (877) WNV-BIRD OR the following web site

Website: <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>

#### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

*General information about WNV (in English and other languages), map of WNV activity in the U.S., insect repellent and human infection:*

5:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Monday – Friday; 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. PST, Weekends

English / Spanish: (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636)

TTY: (800) 232-6348

Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>

#### **National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC):**

*Information about spraying insecticide:*

6:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. seven days a week

1-800-858-7378

Web Site: <http://npic.orst.edu>

Brochure: <http://npic.orst.edu/brochure.pdf>

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