



# SHASTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

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INTERIM MANAGER

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2024

### California Mosquito Awareness Week: April 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>

Days are heating up and spring is upon us. As we move closer toward the summer, the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (SMVCD) personnel have been monitoring mosquito populations, tracking any potential disease occurrences, and treating areas of standing water to prevent mosquito breeding. These efforts reduce adult mosquito populations before they emerge from the water.

The precipitation we received over the last few months will have an impact on our mosquito season. We are seeing existing sources fill with water and new sources appear in places that used to be dry. With this amount of water, and as nighttime temperatures get warmer, mosquito production will increase dramatically.

“All the residents in our District play an important role by reducing standing water around their property and by reporting standing water to the District. By taking these steps in reducing mosquito breeding sites, we can reduce mosquito bites,” said Interim District Manager, Darcy Buckalew. Mosquitoes in California are responsible for transmitting serious viruses such as West Nile virus (WNV) and St Louis Encephalitis virus (SLEV), which can cause debilitating cases of meningitis, encephalitis, and even death. In 2023, there were 428 human cases of WNV and 19 deaths state-wide; of those, 6 were local cases in Shasta County. In 2023, we also encountered a re-emergence of SLEV in Shasta County, which had not been found here since 1972.

To raise awareness and educate Californians about the threat of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases, SMVCD and the California Legislature declared April 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2024 as California Mosquito Awareness Week. To highlight the week, the Sundial Bridge in Redding, CA will be lit-up green on Thursday and Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. On Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, from 5:30pm to 8:00pm, join District staff at the Domke Plaza in front of the Sundial Bridge while they distribute brochures, repellent, and information to Shasta County residents.

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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”.*

As the days become warmer and residents begin spending an increased amount of time outdoors during dusk and dawn, the risk of mosquito bites also increases. SMVCD is charged with protecting the health of the District residents from mosquito and vector-borne diseases, but they cannot do it alone. SMVCD staff urges residents to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites by implementing the **4 Ds** of protection:

- **D**rain any standing water that may produce mosquitoes, including old tires, buckets, gutters, and flowerpots and saucers. 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 making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- **D**usk or **D**awn, avoid outside activities during peak mosquito feeding times.
- **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, contact the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District at (530) 365-3768 or visit [www.ShastaMosquito.org](http://www.ShastaMosquito.org).

**2024** Shasta County West Nile virus activity: **0** dead birds, **0** sentinel chickens, **0** mosquito samples, and **0** humans tested positive for West Nile virus.

**2024** California West Nile virus activity: **11** dead birds, **0** sentinel chickens, **1** mosquito sample, and **0** humans tested positive for West Nile virus.

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