DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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First Positive Indicators for West Nile Virus Reported in Needles

The Division of Environmental Health Service's Mosquito and Vector Control Program (MVCP) have sentinel chicken flocks placed in various locations throughout San Bernardino County to detect West Nile Virus (WNV), a virus transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. If any sentinel chickens test positive for WNV, it means that the mosquito population in these areas are infected, increasing the possible risk of the public being infected. Chickens are not harmed by the virus. Three chickens from a sentinel flock in Needles were reported to have tested positive for WNV. This is the first positive indicator for WNV in San Bernardino County's Colorado River Valley. Residents and visitors to this area should take appropriate precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites.

Those infected with West Nile fever may experience flu-like symptoms that can include fever, body aches, skin rash, and fatigue. In some individuals, West Nile fever can develop into a more serious form of the disease. If you have been bitten by mosquitoes and are experiencing these symptoms, contact your medical care provider.

Residents can protect themselves from WNV by following these tips:

- **Drain or Dump** – Remove all standing water around your property where mosquitoes can lay eggs such as birdbaths, green swimming pools, ponds, old tires, buckets, flower pots, clogged gutters, or even puddles from leaky sprinklers.
- **Dawn and Dusk** – Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active.
- **Dress** – Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeved shirts that are loose fitting and light colored.
- **DEET** – Apply insect repellent containing DEET according to manufacturer's directions.
- **Doors** – Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

If you see a dead bird, submit an online dead bird report on the California West Nile Virus Website at http://www.westnile.ca.gov or call the Dead Bird Hotline at 1-877-968-2473.

To learn more about West Nile Virus, visit http://www.cdc.gov/westnile. For more information or to report a green pool or mosquito breeding source, contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health Division of Environmental Health Services at (800) 442-2283 or visit our website at http://www.sbcounty.gov/dph/dehs.

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