DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sentinel Chicken in Needles Tests Positive for West Nile Virus

San Bernardino: A chicken from a sentinel flock in Needles has tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). This is the first indicator of WNV in the High Desert this year. Previously this year, 30 other chickens from sentinel flocks in Colton, Fontana, Rialto, and Upland tested positive for WNV. Ten samples of mosquitoes in Colton, Fontana, Grand Terrace, Redlands, and San Bernardino and a dead crow in San Bernardino have also tested positive for WNV.

West Nile Virus activity across the nation has been at a record-high. As of August 28, 1,590 human cases of WNV (including 65 fatalities) have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Approximately 56% of the human cases in the United States were classified as neuroinvasive disease (i.e. meningitis or encephalitis).

It is very important that property owners remove all sources of stagnant water from their property. San Bernardino County residents with pools are urged to keep them clean. Mosquitoes will breed in stagnant water sources and green pools. Residents can play a role in preventing West Nile Virus from further spreading in our County by eliminating all sources of stagnant water.

San Bernardino County residents can protect themselves from WNV by taking these precautions:

- Drain or Dump Remove all standing water around your property where mosquitos lay eggs such as birdbaths, green swimming pools, ponds, old tires, buckets, clogged gutters, or even puddles from leaky sprinklers.
- Dawn and Dusk Avoid spending time outside when mosquitos 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 mosquitos from entering your home.

You can report dead birds or squirrels to the State West Nile Virus toll-free hotline at (877) WNV-BIRD, or online at www.westnile.ca.gov.

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 www.sbcounty.gov/dehs.

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