



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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Positive indicators for Saint Louis Encephalitis Virus found in Needles

The Saint Louis Encephalitis Virus (SLEV) has been detected in a flock of chickens in Needles-- the first positive indicator for the virus in San Bernardino County since 1997.

The Division of Environmental Health Service's Mosquito and Vector Control Program (MVCP) have sentinel chicken flocks in various locations throughout San Bernardino County to detect SLEV, a virus transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Two chickens from a sentinel flock in Needles tested positive for SLEV indicating an increased risk of infection to the public. Chickens are not harmed by the virus.

Most people who become infected with SLEV have no apparent symptoms. The initial symptoms of those who become ill include fever, headaches, dizziness, nausea, and fatigue. In some individuals, SLEV can develop into a more serious form of the disease, especially older adults. If one has been bitten by mosquitoes and is experiencing these symptoms, one should call a medical care provider.

Residents can protect themselves from SLEV by following these tips:

- **Drain or Dump** – Remove all standing water around 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 homes.

To learn more about Saint Louis Encephalitis virus, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/sle/> 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>.

