

San Joaquin County West Nile Virus Task Force



News Release



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FIRST HUMAN WNV FATALITY DETECTED IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY THIS YEAR

(STOCKTON, CA) — San Joaquin County Public Health Services announced today that an 86-year-old male living in the central area of San Joaquin County has died from complications due to West Nile Virus (WNV). This is the first reported WNV death of a San Joaquin County resident in 2007. With the warm weather, there has been a rapid increase in mosquitoes in the county and increased spread of WNV.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through the bite of a mosquito. “With the recent increase in the mosquito population, West Nile Virus is a concern in the County and around the state. It is very important that people take precautions to avoid mosquito bites,” said Dr. Karen Furst, Health Officer of San Joaquin County.

About one in five people infected with WNV will develop West Nile Fever with symptoms of headache, fever and fatigue. In some people, the fatigue may last several weeks to months. About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease. This is a severe condition with symptoms such as neck stiffness, confusion, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, numbness, and/or paralysis. Symptoms may last several weeks and neurological effects may be permanent. The risk of severe disease is highest in people over 50 years old and those with other health problems affecting their immune systems. People with diabetes are also at increased risk of severe disease from WNV. The average age of people reported with WNV in San Joaquin County is 42 years old.

During 2006, there were 8 human cases, 12 horse cases, 46 groups of mosquitoes, and 19 sentinel chickens that tested positive for WNV in San Joaquin County.

Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:

- Apply insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET or Picaridin when outdoors, according to label instructions.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, at dawn and dusk, and especially for the first two hours after sunset.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Exclude mosquitoes from your home with tight fitting screens on doors and windows.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.

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- Contact your veterinarian for information on vaccinating equine against WNV.

More Information on West Nile Virus:

Residents and visitors of San Joaquin County can obtain additional information on West Nile Virus including local mosquito control activities by calling the information line 209-469-8200 or on the web at www.sjgov.org/oes. Spray locations and times will normally be available 36 to 48 hours in advance.

Report mosquito problems to the SJC Mosquito & Vector Control District at 1-800-300-4675 or 209-982-4675.

Report all dead birds and tree squirrels to 1-877-968-2473 or www.westnile.ca.gov.

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