



**Date:** *September 17, 2014*

**Attention:** *ASCIP Members*

**Subject:** *West Nile Virus (WNV)*

**Applicability:** *K-12 and Community College Districts*

ASCIP has been monitoring that West Nile Virus (WNV) is on the rise and has been reported in several areas in California. According to the California Department of Public Health, “the proportion of infected mosquito infected with WNV is at the highest level ever detected in California. So far in 2014, WNV has been detected in 36 California counties with 181 reported human cases.”

WNV is transmitted to human and animals by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Common symptoms of WNV in birds may include inability to fly, disorientation, or unexplained death. According to the Center of Disease Control, most people (70-80%) who become infected with the West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected will develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with milder symptoms, people experience fever and aches that pass on their own. In more severe cases, people may need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive care including intravenous fluids, help with breathing, and nursing care.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends the following prevention techniques to limit exposure to mosquito bites:

- 1) Ensure that no areas with standing water exist which might support the breeding of mosquitoes. The local County Vector Control Agency will usually address issues and inquiries related to mosquitoes and how to implement prudent control measures.
- 2) Mosquitoes bite in the early morning and evening hours. It is encouraged that appropriate protective clothing and repellent be worn if outside during these times.

For the latest information on West Nile Virus activity in the state visit [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov). Lastly, the California Department of Health Services has created a West Nile Virus hotline where the public may report such concerns. Callers to the hotline may report crows, ravens, jays, magpies, and hawks that have been dead for less than 24 hours in their area by calling 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473). The WNV hotline is staffed on weekdays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm weekdays.



# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **West Nile Virus at Highest Level Ever in Mosquitoes**

Significant increase in human cases

SACRAMENTO – Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer, is reminding Californians to remain vigilant against the threat of West Nile virus.

“The proportion of mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus is at the highest level ever detected in California,” Chapman said. “Last week, 52 new human cases were reported to CDPH. We expect to see more people become infected as this is the time of year when the risk of infection is the highest.”

So far in 2014, West Nile virus has been detected in 36 California counties. There have been 181 human cases reported to CDPH, a significant increase compared to the 101 cases reported by this time last year. Eight confirmed deaths have been reported to CDPH.

West Nile virus is transmitted to humans and animals by the bite of an infected mosquito. For most people, the risk of serious illness is low. However, some individuals – less than one percent – can develop a serious neurologic illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis. People 50 years of age or older and people with diabetes and/or high blood pressure have the greatest risk of developing serious complications.

CDPH recommends that individuals prevent exposure to mosquito bites and West Nile virus by practicing the “Three Ds:”

1. **DEET** – Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 according to label instructions. Repellents keep the mosquitoes from biting you. DEET can be used safely on infants and children 2 months of age and older.
2. **DAWN AND DUSK** – Mosquitoes bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear protective clothing and repellent if outside during these times. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.
3. **DRAIN** – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, and buckets. If you know of a swimming pool that is not being properly maintained, please contact your local mosquito and vector control agency.