

****PRESS RELEASE****



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FIRST DETECTION OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN WESTERN FRESNO COUNTY FOR THE 2023 SEASON

FIREBAUGH, CALIFORNIA - The Fresno Westside Mosquito Abatement District is asking residents to take precautions to protect themselves from mosquito bites and prevent mosquito production after the first detection of West Nile virus in mosquito samples this season. A sample of mosquitoes trapped in the area of Highway 180 and Napa Ave (South of Mendota) tested positive for West Nile virus. This follows detection of West Nile virus positive mosquito samples in the City of Fresno. As of last week, West Nile virus activity has been detected in 17 counties throughout California. This virus is transmitted by mosquitoes of the *Culex* genus, which can develop in a wide variety of urban and rural standing water sources.

“With excess standing water from the wet winter and rapidly rising temperatures we expect to see increasing levels of mosquito and disease activity,” says Conlin Reis, District Manager of the Fresno Westside Mosquito Abatement District. “Eliminating sources of standing water around your property and wearing EPA-approved mosquito repellents during periods of peak activity, particularly dawn and dusk, will help reduce the nuisance and disease risk posed by these mosquitoes.”

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes and exposed to mosquito-borne viruses including West Nile virus, residents are urged to take the following precautions:

- Drain all sources of standing water around your home. Remove unnecessary objects from around your home that can potentially hold water.
- Report observed sources of standing water (i.e. unmaintained swimming pools) and mosquito activity to the Fresno Westside Mosquito Abatement District (559) 659-2437 or at www.fresnowestmosquito.com.
- Irrigation water on farms and other lands should not be allowed to stand for more than four days.
- Report dead birds to 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or www.westnile.ca.gov.
- Repair window and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from entering buildings.
- Wear long sleeves and pants if outdoors when mosquitoes are present.

- Use a repellent containing DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus, picaridin or IR3535, as recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Always read and follow the repellent label instructions.
- Avoid outdoor activity during dawn and dusk when *Culex* mosquitoes are most active.
- Stock mosquitofish in domestic water features, such as backyard ponds and horse troughs. The District will stock mosquitofish, at no cost, in water sources where they are likely to be effective.

For more information on West Nile virus:

California Department of Public Health

<http://westnile.ca.gov/>

Center for Disease Control:

<https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>