

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District

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West Nile Update: More San Fernando Valley Mosquitoes Test Positive

Los Angeles County, Calif. — Ten additional samples of mosquitoes collected from six San Fernando Valley communities were confirmed positive for West Nile virus (WNV). The mosquitoes were collected from Encino, Northridge, Panorama City, Porter Ranch, Sherman Oaks, and Van Nuys. A list of all positive samples to date can be found at: www.glacvcd.org.

"We are beginning to see the anticipated increase in WNV activity in the region," said Kelly Middleton, director of community affairs for the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District. "Last week, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported a total of 6 human infections in the County so far this year, so the time to start taking this seriously is now," she added.

To help increase awareness, vector control districts are working with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to launch the 2018 Champion for WNV Prevention Challenge, encouraging cities and communities to take specific measures to help reduce the risk of mosquito-transmitted disease. Vector control districts across the County encourage everyone to ask their city what they are doing, and get involved and help their community get recognized as a *True Champion* and keep their residents safe.

The District works year-round to actively search for and manage water-holding areas such as gutters, ditches, storm drain channels, basins, and non-functional pools and ponds, but there are many more mosquito breeding sites on private property that require the public's attention. The District cannot do this alone.

Residents, business owners, and property managers must ensure no standing water is permitted on their property. Yard and parking lot drains, air conditioner drip pans/buckets, rain barrels, non-functional swimming pools, and other containers such as rain barrels, plant saucers, and old tires must be removed or sealed to prohibit mosquito access.

To prevent bites, and the risk of disease transmission, the District recommends EPA-registered repellents that have been shown to be both safe and effective when used according to label directions: DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus.

About West Nile virus:

According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, West Nile virus is a leading cause of severe infections of the nervous system among adults older than age 50 in Los Angeles County.

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WNV is transmitted to people and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. There is no cure for WNV. One in five persons infected with the virus will exhibit symptoms. Symptoms can include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, or a skin rash. These symptoms can last for several days to months. One in 150 people infected with the virus will require hospitalization. Severe symptoms include high fever, muscle weakness, neck stiffness, coma, paralysis, and possibly death.

For more information, residents can contact the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District at 562-944-9656 or online at www.glacvcd.org.

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