

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District

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First West Nile Positive Mosquitoes Found – Panorama City

Los Angeles County, Calif. — The Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District (GLACVCD) confirmed West Nile virus (WNV) in a sample of mosquitoes collected from Panorama City (zip code 91402). This is the first confirmation of WNV activity in the District's service area this year.

While this is only the first confirmation, it should serve as a strong reminder that mosquitoes throughout much of Los Angeles County are active, may be carrying West Nile virus, and can infect people if they bite. Last year alone, the District collected 394 samples of mosquitoes confirmed positive for WNV.

"We find widespread West Nile Virus throughout the southland every year. This is an annual risk, and one residents must be aware of, and take actions to prevent," said Susanne Klueh, director of scientific technical services, "We can't do this alone."

Many mosquito repellents are available to prevent bites, but they do not all work equally well. The Centers for Disease Control recommend products with the active ingredients DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus as being safe and effective against mosquitoes that can transmit disease when used according to the labels. Wearing loose-fitting long sleeves and pants can also help deter bites.

Eliminating mosquitoes from properties is also important. Any water left standing for more than one week in containers such as rain barrels, fountains, buckets, and poorly maintained swimming pools/spas provides the perfect breeding habitat for mosquitoes. GLACVCD would like to remind residents that even the smallest water source can contribute to a large public health problem.

Residents must take an active role in reducing the threat of WNV in their neighborhoods by taking the following steps:

- Check for and remove standing water in clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, discarded tires, buckets, watering troughs or anything that holds water for more than a week
- Ensure that swimming pools, spas, and ponds are properly maintained
- Change the water in pet dishes, birdbaths and other small containers weekly
- Request FREE mosquitofish from your local vector control district for placement in ornamental ponds
- Wear insect repellent when outdoors where mosquitoes may be present
- Report neglected (green) swimming pools in your neighborhood to your vector control district

-More-

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

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.

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.

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