



**MARIN/SONOMA
MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT**
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~ News Release ~

REVISED

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Indication of WNV for 2008 in Marin & Sonoma Counties

~1 bird and 1 mosquito sample test positive for West Nile virus

(Cotati), California August 6th, 2008- The Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District received confirmation today that a House Finch tested positive for West Nile virus in Marin County. The bird was picked up in the vicinity of Shores Court and Waterside Circle in San Rafael on July 29, 2008. District personnel will be scouring the area looking for potential breeding sources as well as conducting adult mosquito surveillance.

The first indication of WNV for Sonoma County has been confirmed through a positive mosquito sample. The mosquito sample was collected within the boundaries of the Lakeville Business Park in Petaluma. The District has expanded surveillance in the area and will continue to trap and test mosquitoes for the virus. "It is extremely important that the public protect themselves from mosquito bites as well as prevent standing water around their properties" stated Nizza Sequeira, Public Relations Director. "Lastly, if you are experiencing a mosquito problem call the District, we are here to help" said Sequeira. District employees will be distributing information in the Lakeville Business Park as well as posting signs in the vicinity. Both the positive bird and positive mosquito sample are the first indicators of West Nile virus activity in Marin and Sonoma counties for 2008.

The Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District along with Dr. Fred Schwartz, Marin County Public Health Officer and Dr. Mark Netherda, Sonoma County Public Health Officer are reminding the public to take these protective measures:

- Be aware of when mosquitoes are most active, between dusk and dawn.
- When engaging in outdoor activities, wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and apply insect repellent according to label instructions. Products containing the active ingredient DEET or Picaridin are the most effective.
- Screen all windows and make sure the screens are in good repair.
- Cover septic tanks and screen roof vent pipes.
- Identify and eliminate all sources of standing water around your property including rain gutters, boat covers, tires, tree holes, and plastic containers.
- Report mosquito problems to the District at 1-800-231-3236
- Report all dead birds and squirrels.

Online reporting is preferred at <http://westnile.ca.gov>. The toll-free line to report a dead bird is 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473).

2008 West Nile virus activity:

Sonoma County: 1 mosquito pool tested positive for West Nile virus.

Marin County: 1 bird tested positive for West Nile virus.

2007 West Nile virus activity:

Sonoma County: 2 equine cases, 1 human, 19 birds, 0 squirrels, 0 sentinel chickens and 1 mosquito pool tested positive for West Nile virus.

Marin County: 4 birds tested positive for West Nile virus.

2006 West Nile virus activity:

Sonoma County: 21 dead birds, 1 equine fatality, 2 mosquito pools, 0 humans and 1 sentinel chicken tested positive for West Nile virus.

Marin County: 8 dead birds, 1 equine fatality, 3 mosquito pools, 1 human, 1 Western Gray squirrel, and 2 sentinel chickens tested positive for West Nile virus.

West Nile virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on an infected bird. Symptoms of WNV range from mild flu-like conditions, such as fever, headache, and nausea to a stiff neck, restlessness, stupor, delirium, and convulsions. Most cases are mild; however, fatalities can occur in extreme cases.

The Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District is a public health agency funded by property taxes and committed to protecting the public from mosquitoes and mosquito-borne disease.

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