



MOSQUITO and VECTOR MANAGEMENT DISTRICT of Santa Barbara County

DISEASE SURVEILLANCE REPORT

February 2015

West Nile Virus Activity

No West Nile Virus (WNV) activity has been reported in Santa Barbara County or anywhere else in California in 2015 to date.

Statistics for California WNV activity can be found online at www.westnile.ca.gov. National statistics for WNV can be found at the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

Yellow Fever Mosquito Update

On February 25, 2015 San Diego County announced the first detection of Yellow Fever Mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*) activity in California for 2015 in the City of Chula Vista. Also, Imperial County has announced the first ever find of *Ae. aegypti* in their county near the Mexican border on February 26, 2015.

Sentinel Chicken Flocks

District staff has been bleeding the 4 active chicken flocks once per month for the winter season. In February 2015 the last blood samples of the 2014 sentinel chicken season were taken. The samples were all negative for WNV and other mosquito-borne viruses.

The District has ordered 30 new chickens scheduled to be picked up March 10 at Haley Farms in Modesto, California. The District is coordinating with other Southern California vector control districts so that not all districts will have to travel overnight to Modesto. The new chickens will be Red Leghorns instead of the usual White Leghorns. They will be used to restart the flock at the U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station on Paradise Road and to replace the two year old chickens at the Carpinteria and Solvang flocks. The one year old chickens at Goleta and Mission Hills will serve for another year. The 2015 sentinel chicken season will begin the week of March 30-April 3, 2015.

Samples of blood are collected from each chicken on strips of filter paper and dried overnight. They are then submitted to the California Department of Public Health Vector-Borne Disease Laboratory at Richmond, California where they are analyzed for antibodies to WNV and other mosquito-borne viruses.

West Nile Virus Dead Bird Submissions

The District did not submit any dead birds in February 2015. The Dead Bird Hotline has been inactivated for the winter. However the District has made arrangements with the California Department of Public Health to continue testing certain species of birds reported online at www.westnile.ca.gov through the winter. The District will submit Crows, Jays, Magpies, Ravens, Hawks, Sparrows, and Finches when CDPH approves.

The MVCAC Board of Directors has approved funding the West Nile Virus Dead Bird Hotline for 2015. The Hotline will be fully staffed and functional again in spring 2015.

Citizens can report dead birds to the California Department of Public Health's toll free West Nile Virus Dead Bird Hotline (1-877-968-2473 or 1-877-WNV-BIRD) or online at www.westnile.ca.gov. Local agencies will pick up the dead birds and collect samples via oral swabs that are transferred to RNase cards. The RNase cards are dried outdoors for at least two hours then mailed to the U.C. Davis Center for Vector-Borne Diseases where the samples will be analyzed for West Nile Virus.

Live Mosquito-Borne Virus Surveillance

The District did not conduct any mosquito trapping surveys in February 2015. Live mosquito-borne virus surveillance will resume in March 2015.

This surveillance technique utilizes battery-powered traps that use dry ice as a source of carbon dioxide to attract adult female mosquitoes that are actively seeking a blood meal. The live female mosquitoes are taken into the District's laboratory where they are anesthetized with triethylamine under the fume hood. They are then separated by species using a stereo zoom microscope and placed into "pools." The pools (1 pool = up to 50 adult female mosquitoes of a single species collected at one place at one time) are stored in the District's ultra-low temperature freezer at -70°C until they can be submitted to the U.C. Davis Center for Vector-Borne Diseases at Davis, California where they are analyzed for the presence of live mosquito-borne viruses including WNV.

