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First West Nile Virus Case Reported in Stanislaus County This Season

Stanislaus County—Stanislaus County Public Health has confirmed the first West Nile Virus (WNV) infection this season in an adult male with a non-neuroinvasive illness. WNV is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected mosquitoes and can cause mild to severe illness. Public Health and the local mosquito abatement districts announced the first pools of mosquitoes positive for WNV in May 2024.

Symptoms may include fever, headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people infected with WNV do not have noticeable symptoms and likely will not know they have been infected. Some people may develop mild symptoms, including fever, headache, and fatigue. In rare cases, WNV can cause serious neurologic illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis, which can lead to long-term disability or death. Certain populations, such as older adults, people with diabetes, and people with weakened immune systems, are more likely to develop serious illnesses when infected with WNV.

"We want to remind all residents to take precautions to protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites, especially during the summer months when mosquito activity is at its peak," said Dr. Thea Papasozomenos, Stanislaus County Public Health Officer.

To prevent mosquito bites and reduce the risk of West Nile virus infection, the community is advised to:

1. **Dump and Drain** water around your home where mosquitoes can breed, such as in flowerpots, gutters, buckets, and birdbaths, and report neglected swimming pools, as these can serve as mosquito breeding sites;
2. **Defend** using Insect Repellents containing DEET picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) on exposed skin and clothing;
3. **Dress** in long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes outdoors, especially when mosquitoes are most active at **dawn and dusk**.

Residents who come across dead birds, particularly crows, jays, ravens, or birds of prey, are encouraged to report them to California West Nile Virus dead bird call center at (877) WNV-BIRD (968-2473) or westnile.ca.gov/report. Birds serve as the natural hosts of WNV.

Please report neglected swimming pools to your local mosquito abatement district. For up-to-date information and resources related to West Nile Virus and the ongoing efforts to prevent its spread, visit westnile.ca.gov/faq

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