



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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Positive indicators for West Nile Virus found across the county



Seven chickens from sentinel flocks in Fontana and San Bernardino, combined, have tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV). Although chickens are not harmed by this virus, it shows the mosquito populations in the area are infected with the virus. This increases the public's risk of being infected with West Nile Virus. In addition, a group of 14 mosquitoes collected in Fontana, Rialto, and Redlands tested positive for the virus. These are the first chickens and mosquitoes that tested positive in 2017 within the area served by the Division of Environmental Health Services Mosquito and Vector Control Program (MVCP). MVCP is taking steps to eliminate mosquito breeding hazards.

MVCP has sentinel chicken flocks placed in various locations throughout San Bernardino County to detect West Nile Virus, which is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito.

People bitten by an infected mosquito may develop West Nile fever and experience flu-like symptoms which may include fever, body aches, skin rash, and fatigue. In some people, West Nile fever can develop into a more serious form of the disease. If you have been bitten by mosquitoes and are experiencing these symptoms, contact your medical care provider.

Residents can protect themselves from West Nile Virus by following these tips:

- **Drain or dump** – Remove all standing water around your property where mosquitoes can lay eggs such as birdbaths, green swimming pools, ponds, old tires, buckets, flower pots, clogged gutters, or even puddles from leaky sprinklers.
- **Avoid spending time outdoors at dawn and dusk** – this is when mosquitoes are most active.
- **Dress appropriately when outdoors** – Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeved shirts that are loose fitting and light colored.
- **Apply insect repellent** – Check that your insect repellent contains DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus and apply it according to manufacturer's directions.
- **Doors** – Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

Property owners with pools are encouraged to keep them clean. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in unmaintained green pools and can fly up to 1.5 miles, potentially transmitting the virus and impacting entire neighborhoods.

To learn more about West Nile Virus or to report a dead bird please visit www.westnile.ca.gov. For more information or to report a green pool or mosquito breeding source, contact the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health Division of Environmental Health Services at (800) 442-2283 or visit our [website](#).