



# MARIN/SONOMA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

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## ~ News Release ~

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **MARIN/SONOMA MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT ENCOURAGES THE PUBLIC TO PROTECT THEMSELVES DURING THE LABOR DAY WEEKEND**

**COTATI, Ca., August 30, 2007-** West Nile virus has infected 164 people and claimed the lives of 10 this year in California nearly tripling last year's fatalities at this same time. "The number of human infections as well as deaths this year in California is definitely a concern." Nizza Sequeira, Public Relations Director stated. "Labor Day is a popular holiday with many families camping and enjoying the outdoors. It is imperative that the public take measures to protect themselves from mosquito bites especially when traveling to areas that have a high infection rate of West Nile virus" Sequeira stated.

If you are planning to be outside during peak mosquito activity hours, specifically dusk and dawn be sure to take these proactive measures to lessen the risk of being bitten this holiday weekend:

- Apply an effective mosquito repellent accordingly. Products containing Deet or Picaridin are most effective, while oil of lemon eucalyptus is another option.
- When feasible, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- If you are camping in a tent be sure the screen is zipped and free of holes or tears.
- Apply a permethrin-based product to clothing and camping gear.
- By setting up a screen house, campers can sit inside and still enjoy the outdoors without being bothered by bugs.

#### **West Nile Virus**

West Nile virus was first detected in New York in 1999 and since then has been detected in 48 states, Canada and Mexico. 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.

#### **2007 West Nile virus activity:**

**Sonoma County:** 2 equine cases, 1 bird, 0 squirrels, 0 sentinel chickens, 1 human and 0 mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile virus.

**Marin County:** None

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#### **2006 West Nile virus activity:**

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

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