



## MARIN/SONOMA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

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### ~ News Release ~

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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Novato Bird Tests Positive For West Nile Virus**

(Cotati), California **November 15**, 2006 the presence of West Nile Virus (WNV) has been detected in Marin County again. WNV is a viral disease of birds that can be transmitted to humans by a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird.

Another bird has tested positive for WNV in Novato by the Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District in cooperation with the California State Health Department. The bird was reported from the following location: One (1) American Crow from the City of Novato in the vicinity of Sunset Parkway submitted on 11/03/06. **This year, 29 birds have tested positive for West Nile Virus in Marin and Sonoma Counties (21 in Sonoma County and 8 in Marin County) along with 1 Western Gray Squirrel in Marin County, 3 mosquito pools in Marin County, 2 mosquito pools in Sonoma County; 2 horse deaths (1 in Sonoma County and 1 in Marin County), 1 human case in Marin County and three sentinel chicken conversions (2 in Marin County and 1 in Sonoma County).** The detection of WNV in wild birds and other animals indicated the virus is present in both counties.

“As winter approaches us the cases of positive birds will decline. The virus is endemic of the area and will continue to be a threat. Residents need to be aware of the fact that the diverse topography of Marin and Sonoma Counties lends itself to year round mosquito breeding; not only in the summer time. Of course due

to temperatures, mosquitoes are not as abundant in the winter as in the summer, but that doesn't mean residents shouldn't continue to take preventative measures such as checking their yard and eliminating potential breeding sites" said Nizza Sequeira, Assistant Public Relations Director.

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 along with Dr. Fred Schwartz, Marin County Public Health Officer and Dr. Leigh Hall, Sonoma County Deputy Health Officer are reminding citizens to take these protective measures:

- Avoid being outside 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, while oil of lemon eucalyptus is another option.
- 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.
- Remove water from rain gutters, boat covers, tires, tree holes, plastic containers.
- Report dead birds.

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).

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