

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
DISEASE CONTROL BRANCH**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER ANNOUNCES FIRST  
CONFIRMED HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN THE COUNTY THIS YEAR**

A 53 year old individual in the Moreno Valley area has been infected with West Nile Virus (WNV). This is the first confirmed human case of a resident in Riverside County for 2006, announced Dr. Gary Feldman, Public Health Officer for Riverside County. The individual is currently recovering at home following hospitalization. It has not yet been determined where the virus was contacted.

“Tests conducted by the Riverside County Public Health Laboratory confirmed the WNV result. With positive findings from surveillance testing and the first confirmed human case of West Nile Virus this year in Riverside County, residents and visitors are encouraged to take precautions to protect themselves,” Feldman said.

So far this year, there has been one fatality from WNV in Butte County. WNV has been detected in 43 of California’s 58 counties in 443 dead birds, 423 positive mosquito pools, 143 positive sentinel chicken flocks and 13 horses. Locally, there have been no positive dead birds, 7 positive mosquito pools and one positive sentinel chicken flock in the Mecca/Oasis area, and no horse cases. In 2005, a total of 935 human WNV infections, including 19 WNV related fatalities were reported in California. Last year in Riverside County 104 WNV infections were reported with 5 deaths occurring in elderly individuals.

WNV is transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Health officials emphasized that the risk of serious illness to humans is low. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Elderly individuals and those with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk for serious illness.

Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.
- Contact your local mosquito and vector control agency if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work.

A comprehensive surveillance program to monitor for WNV in Riverside County has been established by the Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, local mosquito and vector control districts and other state and local agencies. The program includes testing suspect cases in humans and horses, capturing and testing mosquitoes, testing sentinel chickens and evaluating dead birds.

Anyone who becomes ill after exposure to mosquitoes should contact his or her health care provider. The Riverside County Department of Public Health Disease Control Office can be reached at (951) 358-5107, for more information about West Nile Virus. Problems related to mosquito control should be directed to the appropriate Mosquito control office:

- Riverside City Mosquito Control                    951-351-6127
- Riverside County Mosquito Control            951-766-9454
- Northwest Mosquito and Vector Control    951-340-9792
- Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District    760-342-8287

If you are unsure of which agency services your area you may go to:

<http://westnile.ca.gov/ziplocator.php>

and enter your zip code.

Information about WNV is available on the WEB site established for surveillance in California:

<http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>

Dead birds can be reported on that same Web site or by calling toll-free 1-877-WNV-BIRD  
(1-877-968-2473).