



NEWS RELEASE

Public Health

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Bird and mosquitoes test positive for West Nile virus in Lake Arrowhead and Needles



San Bernardino County Public Health officials are urging residents to take precautions after a bird carcass collected in Lake Arrowhead and a collection of mosquitoes from Needles tested positive for West Nile virus.

The Steller's jay, collected on July 5, is the first positive case of 2021 within the area served by the County Environmental Health Services Mosquito and Vector Control Program (MVCP). In the same week, a collection of mosquitoes tested positive for West Nile virus in the city of Needles. MVCP is taking steps to eliminate mosquito breeding hazards.

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 as soon as possible.

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/spas are encouraged to keep them clean. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in unmaintained green pools and can fly up to 20 miles, potentially transmitting the virus and impacting entire neighborhoods.

As birds are susceptible to West Nile virus, any dead birds (e.g. crows, jays, magpies, raven, sparrows, finches or raptors) found in local areas should be reported to assist in monitoring for the virus.

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