

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bird Tests Positive for West Nile Virus in Clark County Health District Stresses Need for Protective Actions to Avoid Mosquito Bites

(Las Vegas, Nev., - July 26, 2004) – The Clark County Health District has received confirmation from the Nevada Department of Agriculture Animal Disease Laboratory that a dead kestrel hawk has tested positive for West Nile virus. The bird was found by a resident earlier this month in the vicinity of S. Sand Hill Road and E. Russell Road, in the southeastern Las Vegas valley.

West Nile virus is spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes, which acquire the virus by feeding on infected birds. The illness is not spread person to person. The health district recommends people take the following actions to reduce their individual risk of being bitten by a mosquito:

- Apply an insect repellent containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) according to manufacturer's directions.
- Wear pants and long-sleeved shirts, when outdoors.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, notably at dusk (the first two hours after sunset) and dawn.
- Eliminate areas of standing water, including bird baths, un-maintained swimming pools and sprinkler runoff, which support mosquito breeding.
- Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens without tears or holes.

The Clark County Health District Environmental Health Division, in collaboration with the Nevada State Health Division and Clark County Vector Control is continuing surveillance activities to monitor the extent of West Nile virus activity in Southern Nevada. Three categories

(more)

of surveillance are currently underway in Clark County: dead bird testing (principally crows, ravens and magpies are sought), mosquito testing and sentinel chicken flock testing.

For additional information on West Nile virus, visit the health district website at <http://www.cchd.org>, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm> and the Clark County Vector Control website at <http://www.co.clark.nv.us/pubworks/neighborhood/bee.htm>. As an added resource, the health district has established a telephone information line at (702) 385-INFO (4636), which provides basic information on West Nile virus and telephone contact numbers for the public to report dead birds, mosquitoes, standing water, etc.

Future information releases on West Nile virus testing results will be issued in the form of Public Health Updates posted to the health district website at <http://www.cchd.org>.

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