

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 28, 2012

Health District detects West Nile in mosquitoes

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District is reporting its first West Nile positive mosquitoes in the 89107 zip code. To date, there are no human cases of West Nile virus reported in Clark County. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced that West Nile virus infections and illness rates are on record pace this year with more than 1,100 cases and more than 40 deaths (half of which are in Texas) reported through the middle of August.

With the identification of positive mosquitoes in one area of Clark County it is likely that West Nile virus infected mosquitoes are present throughout the valley and precautions against the disease are recommended for all residents and visitors.

West Nile virus can be prevented by using insect repellants and eliminating sources of standing water which support mosquito breeding. For information about prevention tips, visit the health district's West Nile virus pages on its website:

<http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/west-nile/index.php>

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. Many people with the virus will have no symptoms or very mild clinical symptoms of illness. Mild symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach, and back. In some cases the virus can cause severe illness and even death. In 2011, Nevada reported 16 cases, 11 of which were in Clark County. There were no human cases of West Nile virus were reported in Clark County in 2010.

The health district's environmental health specialists routinely survey and treat known breeding sources for mosquitoes and trap them for identification. However, the health district is no longer treating breeding sources on private property, such as green pools. Residents can now report green swimming pools and standing or stagnant water sources to local code enforcement agencies. Contact information for local jurisdictions' code enforcement is available on the health district website at: <http://southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/forms/mosquito.php>.

In addition to West Nile virus, mosquitoes are also tested for Western equine encephalitis and St. Louis encephalitis.

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West Nile virus – add one

The health district recommends the following to prevent mosquito bites and to eliminate breeding sources:

- Apply an insect repellent containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) according to manufacturer's directions. *Repellents containing picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus also have some efficacy. However, DEET is the best-studied and most-effective repellent available.*
- 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, "green" swimming pools and sprinkler runoff, which support mosquito breeding.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDinfo. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDinfo" to 40404.