



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Spring is here
Prepare for West Nile virus season

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District’s annual mosquito control and West Nile surveillance program is under way for 2014. Property owners are urged to eliminate mosquito breeding sources to decrease the mosquito population. In 2013, Southern Nevada reported nine West Nile illnesses. For more information about West Nile virus and tips to eliminate breeding sources, visit the health district website at www.SNHD.info.

The health district advises everyone to be vigilant and conscientious about mosquito breeding sources, which can be as little as a cup of water. Stagnant water sources are the optimal breeding source for mosquitoes. To report a green pool, contact the local code enforcement office. Visit <http://www.southernnevadahealthdistrict.org/forms/mosquito.php> for information.

West Nile virus is spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes, which acquire the virus by first feeding on infected birds and then passing it onto humans, horses and other animals. The illness is not spread person to person or by casual contact. The health district recommends the following strategies to eliminate standing water:

Swimming pools:

- Maintain water circulation and chemical concentrations
- Remove rain water from pool covers
- Stock “out-of-order” pools with mosquito fish
- Change water weekly in wading pools
- Store wading pools indoors when not in use
- Store wading pools upright

Ornamental pools

- Stock with fish
- Remove leaves and thin out plants
- Keep water levels up and keep water clean
- Screen the inlet of the recirculation pump
- If not in use, break holes in the bottom and refill with sand

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Standing water sources

- Repair leaky plumbing under and around the house
- Prevent seepage from garden irrigation
- Divert storm water away from foundations
- Drain the air conditioner outlet
- Clean rain gutters
- Remove and dispose of all unused containers that collect water
- Change water weekly in rooting plant containers
- Usable containers should be stacked upside down

West Nile virus made its first appearance in the United States in the late 1990s in New York and has since spread across the country. The disease first appeared in Nevada in 2003. Between 1999 and 2012, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 37,088 confirmed human cases of West Nile in the United States; 1,549 deaths were reported.

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.