



COUNTY OF LAKE

Health Services Department
922 Bevins Court
LAKEPORT, CALIFORNIA 95453-9739
Telephone 707/263-1090
Fax 707/263-4395

Jim Brown
Health Services Director

Karen M. Tait, MD
Health Officer

Promoting an Optimal State of Wellness in Lake County

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Karen Tait, M.D., Health Officer
Lake County Health Services
Office: (707) 263-1090

Contact: Jamesina J. Scott, Ph.D., District Manager/ Research Director
Lake County Vector Control District
Office: (707) 263-4770

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WEST NILE VIRUS SEASON OFF TO A LATE START

- Officials remind residents to take precautions against mosquito bites.

LAKEPORT, Calif. - After a summer nearly free of signs of the West Nile Virus (WNV), the virus is making a late appearance in Lake County.

Routine surveillance through mosquito testing showed the first positive evidence of WNV in samples collected in early through mid-September in locations near Kelseyville and east of Middletown.

An American crow in the Clearlake Oaks area on September 15 has also tested positive for West Nile Virus.

Although approaching fall weather is associated with diminishing numbers of mosquitoes, Jamesina J. Scott, Ph.D., the District Manager and Research Director of the Lake County Vector Control District notes that "we are still seeing signs of mosquitoes capable of transmitting West Nile Virus."

No human cases of West Nile Virus have been reported in Lake County this year. Statewide, a total of seventy human cases have been reported from eighteen counties during 2011.

Dr. Karen Tait, Lake County Health Officer, notes that "even though the West Nile season will soon be winding down, it is important to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites as long as there is any evidence that transmission of the infection is possible."

West Nile virus is transmitted by mosquitoes to a variety of animals and to humans. Mosquito and Vector Control agencies usually detect the virus in mosquitoes, birds and sometimes tree squirrels before human cases appear. To report a dead bird or squirrel, call 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or visit the California Department of Public Health's West Nile virus website at www.westnile.ca.gov. Most people who become infected with West Nile virus do not show symptoms and will recover uneventfully. Up to twenty percent of people will develop fever, headache, and other nonspecific symptoms that may last several weeks. Approximately one in 150 people will develop severe illness known as neuroinvasive disease. People over age 50 and diabetics appear to be at most risk for the more severe forms of disease. There is no vaccine for humans.

Advice for Lake County residents includes:

- Avoid being outside when mosquitoes are active, especially near dusk and dawn.
- Wear long sleeves and pants and use a mosquito repellent (always read and follow label directions) if they are outside when mosquitoes are active.
- Dump out buckets, wading pools, and other sources of water where mosquitoes develop.
- Call the Lake County Vector Control District at 263-4770 or visit their website at www.lcvcd.org to request assistance in addressing problems with mosquitoes.

For additional information on West Nile virus, visit <http://www.westnile.ca.gov>, http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/wnv_factsheet.htm and <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/RepellentUpdates.htm>.

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