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SHASTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

19200 Latona Road, Anderson, CA 96007
Telephone: (530) 365-3768 Fax: (530) 365-0305
Web: shastamosquito.org

**Contact: John Albright 365-3768
Peter Bonkrude 365-3768**

NEWS RELEASE

November 2nd, 2010

The Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District Introducing Rodent Borne Disease Program

Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (SMVCD) kicked off their winter activities this year by training staff for the District's new rodent-borne disease program. The District will conduct several surveillance events each season, but will primarily focus on education with the community; looking at ways to exclude rodents from their homes and structures.

Rodents and the fleas or ticks they carry can transmit several diseases, either through inhalation of droppings or through the bite of an infected flea or tick. This includes such diseases as Hantavirus cardiopulmonary syndrome (HCPS), plague, tularemia, and tick-borne relapsing fever. SMVCD will focus preliminary serological surveys in areas within the District where contact with rodents is likely, however the program will largely comprise working with concerned citizens on exclusion techniques and cleanup procedures.

"With the latest training event, District personnel learned and practiced scientific techniques for capturing and identifying rodents, and collecting samples to test for the presence of diseases that they may harbor or transmit to people in this area," according to Vector Ecologist John Albright.

Our Mission: To protect the public's health and quality of life from diseases and nuisance, through a comprehensive program of mosquito control, and by providing information on all organisms which transmit disease or cause physical nuisance (vectors).

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“With this program SMVCD is looking at getting a clearer picture for rodent-borne disease incidence within the District, but more importantly we hope to work and educate the public on proper rodent control, therefore reducing the potential for any vector-borne disease issues,” said the District Manager Peter Bonkrude.

Fleas, rodents, ticks and mosquitoes are organisms that can spread disease to humans or other animals; they are known as "vectors". The District focuses primarily on surveillance and control of mosquitoes during the warmer, drier times of the year.

The District has planned a busy winter season, which will include the second year of tick-borne disease surveillance, physical mosquito control projects and the early season surveillance of standing water habitats that will soon be breeding mosquitoes.

For more information and advice the public is invited to visit the District's website at: www.shastamosquito.org

For more information on Rodents and Rodent-Borne diseases:

California Department of Public Health
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/vbds/Pages/default.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/index.html>

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Our Mission: “To protect the public’s health from vector-borne disease and nuisance, through a comprehensive mosquito and vector control program focused on innovation, experience and efficiency.”