

SHASTA MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

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District Staff Prepares as Summer Months Approach and Encourages Residents to do the Same

Since early February, District personnel have been monitoring mosquito populations, disease occurrences, and treating areas of standing water with mosquito control products and mosquito fish to prevent mosquito breeding. Being proactive to reduce mosquito populations before they become flying adults is a central part of the District's Integrated Vector Management philosophy.

To raise awareness and educate Californians about the threat mosquitoes and vectors pose to our community and to encourage them to take measures to reduce mosquito populations and protect themselves, the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District and the California Legislature declared April 15th-22nd, 2018 as Mosquito Awareness Week.

"All District residents play an important role in protecting themselves and others by reducing water around their property, reporting standing water to the District and taking steps to reduce mosquito bites." said District Manager Peter Bonkrude. Mosquitoes in California are responsible for transmitting serious viruses such as West Nile and St. Louis encephalitis to people, which can cause debilitating cases of meningitis, encephalitis, and even death. 2017 saw the highest percentage of deaths in California from West Nile virus. There were 553 reported human cases resulting in 44 deaths. In Shasta County, we saw one human case in 2017.

In response to the growing mosquito borne threats, the District completed an expansion to their surveillance and research laboratory in 2018. This will allow the District to better meet the needs of the area as new and emerging vectors and diseases continue to expand their boundaries. The District already has plans to expand our surveillance network and, in the future, begin performing in-house diagnostic testing for diseases such as West Nile virus.

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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".

As the days become warmer and residents begin spending an increased amount of time outdoors during dusk and dawn, the risk of mosquito bites also increases. Following the **4 D's** is essential for preventing mosquito bites and reducing the potential risk of mosquito borne diseases.

SMVCD is charged with protecting the health of our residents from mosquito and vector-borne diseases, but they cannot do it alone. SMVCD staff urges residents to take precautions to avoid mosquito bites; reducing activity during the peak mosquito feeding times at dawn and dusk, wearing effective insect repellent, and staying behind screened windows and doors whenever possible.

The Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District advises the public to implement the **4 Ds** of protection:

- **D**rain any standing water that may produce mosquitoes, this includes flower pots, old tires, and buckets. Some species of mosquitoes can lay their eggs in very small sources of water, like a bottle cap.
- **D**efend yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent and by making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- **D**usk or Dawn avoid outside activities.
- **D**ress in long sleeves and pants when mosquitoes are active.

For more information about SMVCD's services, West Nile virus, or new emerging mosquito borne diseases like Zika virus, contact the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District at (530) 365-3768 or visit www.shastamosquito.org.