

Health and Human Services Agency

Shasta County

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRST HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS INFECTION OF 2013 IDENTIFIED IN SHASTA COUNTY

Residents urged to take precautions

Shasta County has its first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) this year, Public Health has learned. The patient, an adult from central Shasta County, did not require hospitalization and is recovering.

Symptomatic West Nile Virus disease is uncommon, but if you have symptoms including high fever, severe headache, new unexplained confusion, or stiff neck, contact your health care provider immediately. Tell your doctor if you have had recent mosquito bites.

"Wherever there are mosquitoes, everyone is at risk for West Nile Virus during this warm autumn," said Health Officer Andrew Deckert, MD, MPH, of Shasta County Public Health. "We are happy that the patient is at home recovering."

WNV is almost always transmitted to people from the bite of an infected mosquito. It is not transmitted from person to person, nor from horses or other animals to humans. Shasta County residents are urged to make effective mosquito repellent a part of their regular outdoor routine.

The best way to avoid the virus is to prevent mosquito bites using the Four Ds:

- **DRAIN** standing water around the house weekly since it's where mosquitoes lay eggs. This includes tires, cans, flower pots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles.
- **DUSK & DAWN** are when mosquitoes that carry the virus are most active, so limit outdoor activities or take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.
- **DEET** is an effective ingredient to look for in insect repellants. Always follow label instructions carefully.
- **DRESS** in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

To help fight West Nile Virus in Shasta County:

- Report significant mosquito problems to Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District (serving limited areas of the greater Redding area) at 365-3768 or www.shastamosquito.org, the Burney Mosquito Abatement District (serving Burney Basin) at 335-2133, the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District (serving Fall River Valley) at 336-5740.
- Report recently dead birds to the State hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or visit the web site at www.westnile.ca.gov. Though not all birds can be picked up for testing, all calls help track the virus. Dead birds should be picked up with a plastic bag and not touched.
- Vaccinate your horses, because mortality is high in unvaccinated horses. Vaccine must be given before the animal is exposed.

For more information about West Nile Virus, contact Shasta County Public Health at 225-5591 or visit www.shastahhsa.net.

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