

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FIRST HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS REPORTED IN SHASTA COUNTY THIS SEASON

SHASTA COUNTY - A local adult is the first person in Shasta County to be reported this season with West Nile virus, according to the Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency and the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District. The person is currently hospitalized.

West Nile virus is almost always transmitted to people from the bite of an infected mosquito and is not transmitted by contact with people or other animals.

Symptoms of West Nile virus can include high fever, severe headache, worsening confusion or stiff neck. If you have symptoms, contact your health care provider immediately. Tell your doctor if you have had recent mosquito bites.

“West Nile virus is a serious illness spread by mosquitoes in Shasta County. Checking your yard regularly for standing water and protecting yourself from mosquito bites by using an EPA-approved insect repellent can dramatically reduce your risk of contracting the disease,” said Peter Bonkrude, District Manager of the Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District.

West Nile virus can be found in all parts of Shasta County, so 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 every 4-5 days, since it’s where mosquitoes lay eggs. This includes tires, cans, flowerpots, 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.

- **DEFEND** yourself and your home by using an effective insect repellent and making sure screens on doors and windows are in good condition.
- **DRESS** in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends DEET and three other mosquito repellents for use on skin and clothing: Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and IR3535. Always follow instructions on containers carefully. The Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District, Burney Basin Mosquito Abatement District and the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District have been performing extensive control measures in and around Shasta County to reduce both larval and adult mosquitoes.

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, Anderson and Shasta Lake area) at 365-3768 or www.shastamosquito.org, the Burney Mosquito Abatement District (serving Burney Basin) at (530) 335-2133, or the Pine Grove Mosquito Abatement District (serving Fall River Valley) at (530) 336-5740 or visit www.pinegrovemosquitoabatement.com.
- Report recently dead birds to the state hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) or visit <https://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 West Nile virus mortality is high in unvaccinated horses. Vaccine must be given before the animal is exposed.
- For more information about West Nile virus, contact the Shasta County Health and Human Services Agency at (530) 225-5591 or visit www.shastahhsa.net.

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