



**TULARE COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY**

Jason T. Britt, M.S. • Agency Director



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: August 28, 2018

Avoiding Mosquito Bites a Matter of Health

Residents and medical providers asked to report bites or illness

VISALIA, CA – There is a confirmed incidence of West Nile Virus in an individual in Porterville, and the Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, Delta Vector Control District, and Tulare Mosquito Abatement District are warning all Tulare County communities to be vigilant against mosquito bites, as they may cause St. Louis Encephalitis Virus or West Nile Virus. Mosquito samplings across Tulare County have resulted in higher positive samples of the St. Louis Encephalitis Virus (SLEV) than in past years.

Tulare Mosquito Abatement District sampling has resulted in 19 positive mosquito samples (containing between 10 and 50 female mosquitoes, capable of transmitting SLEV or WNV) this year for SLEV, whereas there were only three positive samples last year at the same time. In comparison, this year there have only been five positive samples of West Nile Virus (WNV), whereas last year there were 46.

The Delta Vector Control District, which serves most of Northern Tulare County, has had 77 positive mosquito samples for SLEV this year and 23 positive for WNV, out of 2,935 mosquito samples tested. At this time in 2017, they had 14 positive mosquito samples for SLEV and 514 positive for WNV, out of 2,353 samples tested.

Both SLEV and WNV are illnesses caused by mosquito bites. Community members should take precautions to prevent being bitten by mosquitoes and report any incidence of mosquito presence.

Symptoms of SLEV and WNV can vary:

- West Nile Virus (WNV) – Although most individuals will experience minimal or no effects from WNV, symptoms include fever, headache, body aches, skin rash, and swollen lymph nodes, while more severe symptoms include disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, and paralysis. If you experience symptoms three to 14 days after being bitten, contact your local physician.
- St. Louis Encephalitis Virus (SLEV) – SLEV is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, and most people have no symptoms or only mild, flu-like illness. However, especially in the elderly, SLEV can cause serious illness that affects the central nervous system. If you experience symptoms five to 15 days after being bitten, contact your local physician.

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes, Tulare County residents are strongly urged to:

- Report mosquito presence (anonymously, if you like) by calling the Delta Vector Control District, toll-free, at 1-877-732-8606, or by reporting online at www.DeltaVCD.com, or on its Facebook (DeltaVectorControlDistrict), Twitter (@DeltaVCD), or Instagram (@DeltaVCD) accounts. For information about the Tulare District, please call (559) 686-6628. If your area does not have a vector control agency, contact your city code enforcement office.
- Apply insect repellents that contain DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 according to label instructions, especially in the early morning and evening.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants if outside in the early morning and evening.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens that have holes.
- Eliminate standing water and containers that can hold water from around the home and yard.

Find out about mosquito reports all over the state of California by logging on to www.westnile.ca.gov. A current map of virus activity can be seen on the Delta Vector Control District homepage, www.DeltaVCD.com, by clicking on the tab "Current Mosquito Collections."



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