



HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

830 Scenic Drive, P.O. Box 3271, Modesto, CA 95353
Fax: (209) 558-8320
www.hsahealth.org

NUMBER: 13-04
FOR RELEASE: Immediate

DATE: April 23, 2013
TURLOCK MAD: David Heft
Phone: (209) 634-1234
EAST SIDE MAD: Lloyd Douglass
Phone: (209) 522-4098

**State Legislature Names April 21-27, 2013,
West Nile Virus and Mosquito Control Awareness Week**

Stanislaus County - Coinciding with the onset of warm weather and the mosquito season, the State Legislature has named April 21-27, 2013, West Nile Virus and Mosquito Control Awareness Week in California. East Side and Turlock Mosquito Abatement Districts (MAD) have begun surveillance and control operations for mosquitoes that might be carrying West Nile Virus (WNV). It is strongly encouraged that the citizens of Stanislaus County take an active role in prevention by getting into the habit of using insect repellent when they are outdoors. Almost all victims of WNV report that they did not routinely wear insect repellent prior to infection.

According to Lloyd Douglass, Manager of East Side MAD, "West Nile Virus is here to stay and we expect to see WNV activity again this year. Making sure to eliminate backyard sources that contain standing water where mosquitoes lay their eggs and wearing insect repellent are the most effective ways to reduce the odds of being infected with WNV."

Last year, 26 Stanislaus County residents were reported to have WNV. This is the highest incidence rate to date since WNV was first detected in Stanislaus County in 2004. Residential backyard sources such as neglected swimming pools and ornamental ponds continue to be problematic, and they are considered prime breeding locations for mosquitoes. The Districts are recommending that property owners take responsibility for maintaining their backyards to prevent mosquito breeding. The kind of mosquitoes found breeding in backyards are the same species that are responsible for infecting people with WNV. The public is asked to notify the Districts of any suspected or known neglected swimming pools.

According to David Heft, Manager Turlock MAD "The Districts are concerned about controlling mosquitoes from backyard sources, but we also ask that our citizens get into the habit of using insect repellents on a regular basis when they are outdoors to prevent mosquito bites. The most effective insect repellents contain active ingredients such as DEET, Picaridin, or oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, and are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. "

To report mosquito-breeding problem areas, request service or mosquito fish, Stanislaus County residents should contact one of the two mosquito abatement districts that serve the county. For Stanislaus County addresses north of the Tuolumne River contact Eastside Mosquito Abatement District (www.eastsidemosquito.com) at 209.522.4098. All others should contact the Turlock Mosquito Abatement District (www.turlockmosquito.org) at 209.634.1234.

-CONTINUED-

People can use these simple steps to help protect themselves and others from mosquito bites and WNV:

- Dump or drain sources of standing water. During warm weather, mosquitoes can breed within four days. Examples of backyard sources include: pet bowls, bird baths, rain gutters, tires, flower pots, toys, ornamental ponds, and neglected swimming pools.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, at dawn and dusk, and for the first two hours after sunset.
- When outdoors, wear pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Keep mosquitoes out of your home with tight fitting screens on doors and windows.
- Apply insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or Picaridin according to label instructions when outdoors.

For more information call the West Nile Virus hotline at (209) 558-8425 to hear recorded information in both English and Spanish. You can also visit www.stanemergency.com for WNV information.

###