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Mosquito Control Efforts in Stanislaus County

Stanislaus County health officials have announced mosquito surveillance and control activities are underway within the county. Residents are urged to play their part by eliminating standing water on their property and informing their local mosquito abatement district if they are being bitten by mosquitoes.

"This year is going to be a challenging year for mosquito control in Stanislaus County," says David Heft, General Manager of the Turlock Mosquito Abatement District. "Not only do we have thousands of acres flooded along river corridors in the county but irrigation customers will be receiving a full allotment of water this year." (2016: 18" / 2017: 48")

President Trump made a fourth emergency declaration for an estimated \$540 million in water damages from the winter storms in California, \$274 million is earmarked specifically to address repairs to the Oroville Spillway. Local mosquito officials are hoping that a piece of the money allocated to Stanislaus County will go towards addressing the significant public health threat that looms due to the thousands of acres of standing water present.

In addition to the flooding, winter storms have filled up backyard sources such as neglected swimming pools, buckets, used tires, etc., all contributing to the large number of mosquitoes being collected. Aerial surveillance photography targeting neglected swimming pools and other mosquito-breeding sources have been taken throughout the county. Mosquito Control staff continue ongoing inspections and treatments of these mosquito-breeding sources to try to eliminate mosquito populations and prevent the spread of diseases like West Nile Virus.

It is projected that these high early populations of mosquitoes will greatly increase the transmission of West Nile virus later in the summer months in 2017. In 2016, there were 30 individuals diagnosed with West Nile virus (WNV) and one related death within Stanislaus County reported last year. In California, there were 483 human cases of the disease resulting in 19 fatalities according to CDPH in 2016.

Residents are urged to continue to report dead birds to the WNV State Hotline: 1-877-968-2473. Reports may also be made online at www.westnile.ca.gov. Dead bird reports are an important tool for West Nile Virus detection, even if the bird is not picked up and tested. Lack of dead bird reports decreases the ability to detect higher risk locations.

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To date, the type of mosquitoes that can carry Zika virus have **NOT** been detected in Stanislaus County. “There are no locally mosquito transmitted cases of Zika, Dengue or Chikungunya virus in California. We are actively trapping for the invasive species of mosquitoes that carry these diseases,” states Lloyd Douglass, Manager of East Side Mosquito Abatement. “West Nile Virus, however, is in Stanislaus County and we urge people to take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.” Mosquito Abatement Districts are requesting residents to report any day time biting mosquito in urban locations to aid in invasive species detection.

Help reduce the risk of contracting mosquito-borne diseases by following these guidelines:

- **Dump or drain** standing water. Mosquitoes prefer to lay eggs in stagnant water.
- **Defend** yourself against mosquitoes using repellents containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.
- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are present, typically **Dawn** and **Dusk**.
- **Report neglected swimming pools** by calling your local mosquito abatement district.
Anonymous calls accepted.

There are two mosquito abatement districts to serve residents in Stanislaus County. Residents north of the Tuolumne River contact the Eastside Mosquito Abatement District at (209) 522-4098. Residents south of the Tuolumne River should contact the Turlock Mosquito Abatement District at turlockmosquito.org or (209) 634-1234.