



Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

43-420 Trader Place, Indio, CA 92201

(760) 342-8287 www.cvmosquito.org

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District workers return to protect the Coachella Valley from mosquito-borne viruses

As services resume, no West Nile Virus detected in mosquito samples last week.

Indio, CA. Due to impacts of COVID-19 on District employees, some operations were suspended from June 12-24, 2020.

The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District technicians and laboratory staff have been hard at work since services resumed; visiting and treating known mosquito breeding sources such as catch basins and drains, irrigation run off, and answering calls for help from the public.

Trapping and testing for virus has also resumed and the results are encouraging. There were no mosquito samples that tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV) last week. One mosquito sample tested positive for St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLEV) near Pierce Street and 70th Avenue in Oasis. Technicians are enhancing surveillance looking for water sources in the area.

Background

Beginning on March 18, the District was closed to public visitors and a no face-to-face contact order was initiated for home inspections. A local emergency was declared by the District's Board of Trustees on March 23 allowing the General Manager and staff to take the necessary steps for the protection of life, health and safety. At each step, the District has been following federal, state, and county public health guidelines and taking precautions to safeguard employees and the public.

District employees continued to provide essential services for our community. Staff tirelessly continued surveying and inspecting for mosquito breeding sources and mosquito-borne diseases to ensure our community's safety from vectors and the diseases they may carry.

Facemasks were required for all staff that came to the District offices and worked in the community. Daily cleaning and sanitizing measures were installed in office spaces and vehicles. Social distancing was required and enforced in meeting rooms, locker rooms, and training spaces.

Many administrative staff members began working remotely, further lessening contact between staff members to help reduce the chances of coronavirus. Despite all of these actions in the work place, four team members tested positive for COVID-19, and unfortunately, a longtime employee and friend passed away.



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The General Manager, in consultation with the President of the Board of Trustees, decided to close the facilities and stop work to allow our employees time to self-quarantine and to be tested for COVID-19. This timeline was in adherence with CDC self-monitoring guidelines.

Mosquito Analysis

Prior to the suspension of operations, there were 48 samples that tested positive for either West Nile Virus (WNV) or St. Louis encephalitis virus (SLEV). These samples came from 24 different traps located in 4 cities and 2 un-incorporated areas (Cathedral City, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Oasis, and Thermal) throughout the Valley.

District staff was able to provide enhanced surveillance for these locations, which means looking for and treating any water sources that were breeding mosquitoes. A variety of mosquito treatments were applied in areas where the risk of transmission to people was greatest.

Because of these efforts, trapping in these areas suggested that the number of adult mosquitoes trapped had been reduced and/or mosquitoes trapped later tested negative for any virus.

Going Forward

District staff is again hard at work protecting our community from mosquito-borne illnesses. We encourage each and every one of the residents to stay alert and remove any standing water sources you see.

This is a very challenging moment for our District and community but we will get through this by taking care of ourselves and one another.

The District would like to sincerely thank the community for the outpouring of kindness, condolences, patience, cooperation, and understanding. We urge community members to stay informed about this rapidly evolving health crisis by visiting www.rivcoph.org/coronavirus.

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