



# Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
November 23, 2011

### **VECTOR CONTROL RECEIVED CONFIRMATION OF 2 SENTINEL CHICKENS THAT TESTED POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS**

**INDIO, CA, NOVEMBER 23, 2011:** The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District received confirmation from the Center for Vectorborne Diseases (UC Davis) of 2 sentinel chickens that tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV) positive in the Coachella Valley. The samples were taken from coops located in Thermal and southwest of Mecca. Sentinel chickens are delayed indicators for WNV. District staff will continue its intensified mosquito surveillance, larviciding, and public awareness in these areas, in an effort to reduce the number of adult mosquitoes.

This year there has been 1 human case, 43 confirmed WNV positive mosquito samples, and 33 sentinel chickens positive for WNV in the Coachella Valley. In 2010, the District had no human cases, 69 confirmed WNV positive mosquito samples from across the valley, and 38 sentinel chickens positive for WNV, by this point in the season.

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WNV is transmitted to humans and animals the bite of an infected mosquito. Not all species of mosquitoes are capable of transmitting the virus. Of those that can transmit the virus only a small percentage are actually infected with the virus. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Most individuals who are infected with WNV will not experience any illness. Others will have only mild symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. However, young children, the elderly or individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing more severe symptoms when infected. WNV causes illness and death every year, however many cases are never tested and confirmed by physicians.

The District continues its extensive surveillance, prevention, and treatment programs throughout the Coachella Valley and urges residents to help reduce mosquito breeding sources by inspecting their backyards and neighborhoods for standing water sources at least once a week.

Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:

- Avoid outdoor activity at dusk and dawn.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.
- Report swimming pools and ornamental ponds that are not being maintained. Keep ornamental ponds and neglected pools free of excess vegetation.
- Contact the District for free mosquitofish to place in your ornamental pools, neglected pools or any other container with standing water that can potentially breed mosquitoes
- Contact the District if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work.

Contact the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at 760-342-8287 or 1-888-343-9399 to report mosquito problems, request mosquito fish, and report neglected pools or standing water. You can visit us online at [www.cvmvcd.org](http://www.cvmvcd.org) to obtain more information and submit service requests.

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