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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE March 19, 2008

DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS **--Surveillance Program Uncovers an Early Warning Sign**

ELK GROVE, Calif. -The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) received confirmation late Tuesday that an American Crow found in the city of Herald has tested positive for West Nile virus. This is the first sign of West Nile virus activity for the season. "It is important that the residents of Sacramento and Yolo Counties pay close attention to this early warning sign, an indicator that West Nile Virus is active and present in our area." said David Brown, District Manager. The message is clear; people need to drain standing water sources around their home that may breed mosquitoes and they need to protect themselves with long sleeves or an effective repellent during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active. "We need public support and participation, and must work together as a community to reduce the mosquito population in our area."

Finding this positive dead bird officially elevates the District response plan to Level 2 which entails aggressive larval surveillance in the area.

As temperatures rise, mosquitoes will be out looking for a place to lay their eggs. Abandoned swimming pools with stagnant water are the perfect breeding place. Pools are a significant threat because if left neglected, they can produce thousands of mosquitoes and infect an entire neighborhood. The District would like to remind the public to please report any abandoned swimming pools by calling 1-800-429-1022 or fill out a service request online at www.FIGHTtheBITE.net.

The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District provides year round mosquito and vector control services. The main goal for the District is to keep the public healthy by preventing the transmission of diseases and improving the quality of life for residents of Sacramento and Yolo counties.

To report a dead bird or squirrel, call 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or visit the California Department of Public Health at www.westnile.ca.gov

District's 7Ds of mosquito prevention:

DRAIN any standing water that may produce mosquitoes.

DAWN and **DUSK** are times to avoid being outdoors.

DRESS appropriately by wearing long sleeves and pants when outside.

DEFEND yourself against mosquitoes by using an effective insect repellent, such as DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Make sure you follow label directions!

DOOR and window screens should be in good working condition.

DISTRICT personnel are also available to address any mosquito problem you may be experiencing by calling 1-800-429-1022 or visiting the District online at FIGHTtheBITE.net.

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