

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 17, 2010

Contact: Luz Maria Rodriguez, Public Information Officer
Office: 916.405.2082 | Cell: 916.416.6337
E-mail: lrodriguez@FIGHTtheBITE.net

DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS

--District's Surveillance Program Finds First Sign of Activity for 2010

Elk Grove, Calif.— The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) received preliminary confirmation today that an American Crow has tested positive for West Nile virus. The bird, which was found in east Sacramento, is the first indication of WNV activity of the 2010 season. "Finding this bird is significant because it means that the virus is present in our area" said David Brown, District Manager. "Dead birds provide an early indication of where positive mosquito samples may also be found and where human cases may develop later in the season." Late rains and mild temperatures had delayed the beginning of the mosquito and West Nile virus season, however this first positive bird is a clear warning sign that the virus continues to be active. As a response to the detection of WNV, the District will increase its mosquito trapping and surveillance in the area to find sources where mosquitoes may be breeding.

The public is encouraged to report dead birds by calling the California Department of Public Health hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473). Some species of birds such as crows, jays and magpies are very susceptible to the virus and are more likely to die from the infection. Though not all birds that are called in will be picked up and tested, the reports provide valuable information and assist with mosquito surveillance and control efforts that help protect public health. Birds are hosts for WNV and mosquitoes transmit the virus by biting an infected bird and then biting a person or other animal.

This is the first sign of West Nile virus activity for the Sacramento region; however, statewide 9 other counties have already reported positive dead birds and mosquito samples.

In 2009, 4 deaths and 112 human WNV cases were reported in California.

Practice the District D's of Mosquito Prevention:

DRAIN standing water that may produce mosquitoes.

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

DRESS appropriately be wearing long sleeves and pants when outside.

DEFEND yourself by using an effective insect repellent. Make sure to follow label directions!

DOOR and window screens should be in good working condition.

DISTRICT personnel are also available to address any mosquito problems. Call them at 1-800-429-1022 or visit www.FIGHTtheBITE.net

MAILING ADDRESS

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

8631 BOND ROAD
ELK GROVE, CA 95624

YOLO COUNTY

1234 FORTNA AVENUE
WOODLAND, CA 95695

1.800.429.1022
FIGHTtheBITE.net