

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **SENTINEL CHICKEN TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS** **--First sign of West Nile virus in Yolo County**

Elk Grove, Calif. — The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) announced today that one sentinel chicken located in Yolo County has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). The chicken is part of a flock located in Merritt, an area between Davis and Woodland. The District has 6 sentinel chicken flocks of ten chickens each to assist with the monitoring of WNV. Blood samples of each chicken are collected and tested on a weekly basis. When an infected mosquito bites a sentinel, the chicken will not become ill; instead it will develop antibodies toward the virus. The detection of such antibodies in chickens allows the District to track and monitor virus activity to better reduce transmission to humans. "Finding the virus in a chicken is significant because the flocks are static. This means transmission of West Nile is occurring specifically in that area," said David Brown, District Manager. "Unlike birds that have the ability to fly and its uncertain where they could have been infected, with chickens we know for sure," said Brown.

In addition to chickens, the District has also seen high number of mosquitoes in Yolo County. With the hot temperatures and the surrounding rice fields, mosquitoes will continue to be a problem throughout the summer. "We urge residents to protect themselves by wearing an effective mosquito repellent especially at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active," said Brown.

As a result of finding the West Nile positive chicken, the District will continue to implement its mosquito management plan to protect public health and welfare. This plan includes extensive mosquito trapping around the area where the virus has been detected as well as ground treatments to reduce the numbers of adult mosquitoes.

For current information about any treatments planned, please visit [www.FIGHTtheBITE.net](http://www.FIGHTtheBITE.net). Residents may also subscribe to mailing lists to receive email notifications for mosquito treatments by zip code. To sign up go to Spray Notifications on the website.

**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](http://www.FIGHTtheBITE.net)

DAVID BROWN, MANAGER

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