



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

Aug. 29, 2008

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## **“FIGHT THE BITE” OVER LABOR DAY HOLIDAY WEEKEND *Additional Human West Nile Virus Case Reported; Case Count Rises to 10***

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HSA) reports one more confirmed locally-acquired human case of West Nile virus (WNV), a 20-year-old Oceanside man.

During the Labor Day weekend, San Diego County residents and tourists may spend more time outdoors and be vulnerable to mosquito bites – which is how WNV is transmitted. A second death related to WNV has been reported in nearby Orange County.

“In 2007, there were 20 West Nile virus-related deaths in California – more than any other state,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “With the second reported death in Orange County and the early onset of human cases this year in San Diego County, we strongly urge people to protect against WNV.”

The 20-year-old Oceanside man was diagnosed with meningitis; he was hospitalized and is recovering at home. While the majority of West Nile virus victims are over 50 years old this case demonstrates the need for people of all ages to protect themselves from the virus. The year-to-date human case count is 10, including the new case. In 2007, 15 people tested positive for locally-acquired WNV.

The County urges residents to use insect repellent when outdoors, especially at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active; use insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535; do not sleep outside, unprotected, while camping; wear long sleeves and pants; and ensure screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes or other damage.

“Eliminate mosquito breeding sites on your property,” said Gary Erbeck, Director, County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control. “Mosquitoes can breed in one teaspoon of water. Pet dishes, bird baths, and old tires are common sources. Also, report green pools to Vector Control.”

Most people infected with WNV do not develop any symptoms or become seriously ill. Nearly one in five who do fall ill may suffer from headache, fever, nausea, fatigue, skin rash or swollen glands. If you suspect you have WNV, contact your healthcare provider.

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HNSA is working closely with the County Department of Environmental Health (DEH), which continues its WNV control activities to check for and eradicate possible sources of the virus in San Diego County. A total of 318 dead birds and eight sentinel chickens have tested positive for WNV this year, one horse has died and 13 positive mosquito batches have been identified.

For more information or to report dead birds or green pools, please call the County's WNV information line toll free at (888) 551-INFO (4636) or visit the County's web site at [www.SDFighttheBite.com](http://www.SDFighttheBite.com).

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