



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST 2007 LOCALLY-ACQUIRED HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS CASE REPORTED *Second Probable Case Awaiting Confirmation;* *HHSa and Department of Environmental Health Continue Surveillance*

HHSa (San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency) reports the first confirmed locally-acquired case of West Nile virus (WNV) for this year. Another probable case is awaiting confirmation from the State.

An 86-year-old East County man was diagnosed with meningoencephalitis in late August and remains hospitalized. He reported being bitten by mosquitoes in the La Mesa area.

“West Nile virus, like the seasonal flu, is here to stay, for the foreseeable future,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., San Diego County Public Health Officer. “While there is no WNV vaccine at this time, the public can take many steps to guard against mosquitoes, which spread the disease.”

Precautions include avoiding outdoor activity at dawn and dusk; using insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus; not sleeping outside, unprotected; wearing long sleeves and pants; removing any source of standing water from the perimeter of your property; and ensuring that windows and doors have tight fitting screens without holes or tears.

HHSa 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 45 birds and three horses have tested positive for WNV this year.

“Mosquito prevention remains the key to preventing the transmission of WNV”, said Gary Erbeck, director, Department of Environmental Health. “Backyard sources such as green swimming pools, ponds or fountains must not be allowed to become breeding sites for mosquitoes.”

For more information or to report possible mosquito breeding sources, 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.

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