



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION  
Oct. 7, 2008

**HSA Contact:** Tom Christensen (619) 515-6535  
**Vector Control Contact:** Chris Conlan (858) 694-2137  
**County Veterinarian Contact:** Nikos Gurfield (858) 694-2838

## **HUMAN WEST NILE VIRUS COUNT CONTINUES TO RISE** *Additional Case Brings Total to 23*

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HSA), County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, and County Veterinarian's Office report one new confirmed locally-acquired human case of West Nile virus (WNV), 31 dead birds, and three positive batches of mosquitoes. **The reporting period is from Sept. 29 to Oct. 5, 2008.**

A 51-year-old man who contracted the disease in El Cajon brings the 2008 total to 23 human cases of WNV. He was diagnosed with meningitis and is still hospitalized.

The mosquitoes and dead birds, including 24 American crows, four Western Scrub Jays, one Red-shouldered hawk, one Red-tailed hawk and one Great Horned owl, were found in Bonita, Cardiff, Carlsbad, Campo, Chula Vista, Clairemont, Descanso, Escondido, Fallbrook, Lakeside, Mira Mesa, Oak Park, Oceanside, Pacific Beach, Poway, Rolando, Ramona, Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Santa Fe, Torrey Hills and University City.

2008 to-date case counts include:

- 23 human cases
  - 22 locally-acquired cases
  - 1 non-locally-acquired case
- 480 dead birds
- 13 positive sentinel chickens
- 4 horse deaths
- 1 infected horse
- 37 positive mosquito batches

- more -



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In 2007, there were 15 confirmed human cases of WNV, 118 bird deaths and four positive horses.

Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H, County of San Diego Public Health Officer, and Gary Erbeck, Director, County Department of Environmental Health Vector Control, urge the public to take the following steps to protect themselves against WNV:

- 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
- Ensure screens on windows and doors fit tightly and have no holes or other damage.
- Check your property weekly for mosquito breeding sources; go to [www.SDFighttheBite.com](http://www.SDFighttheBite.com) for a mosquito prevention checklist
- Report green pools to County 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. Approximately one in 150 people infected with WNV develop more serious neurological effects such as meningitis, encephalitis or myelitis. If you suspect you have WNV, contact your healthcare provider.

County Veterinarian Dr. Nikos Gurfield urges all horse owners to have their horses vaccinated. Signs of WNV in horses include stumbling, weakness, muscle twitching, fever, aimless wandering or inability to stand. Contact your veterinarian immediately if your horse has any of these symptoms.

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).

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