



**SAN MATEO COUNTY
MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**DEAD BIRD TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN
SAN MATEO COUNTY**

Atherton, CA – A dead bird collected from Atherton on August 15, 2008, tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). This is the second animal to test positive for WNV in San Mateo County in 2008, following a bird collected from South San Francisco in May.

West Nile Virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. The primary hosts are birds. Humans, horses and other animals can become infected with WNV if bitten by an infected mosquito. It cannot be spread person to person.

The San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District (SMCMVCD) controls mosquitoes through an integrated mosquito control program that targets the immature stages. “Mosquito control technicians are in the field everyday finding and treating catch basins, backyard fishponds, and other breeding sites in the county,” said Dr. Chindi Peavey, Vector Ecologist for SMCMVCD.

Some birds, such as crows, are highly susceptible to West Nile Virus. Reports of dead birds are an early indication that the virus is circulating in the environment and being transmitted by mosquitoes. These reports are grouped together in time and space to predict areas of risk. Residents are encouraged to help by reporting dead birds or tree squirrels, online at www.westnile.ca.gov or by phone at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473).

To prevent mosquito breeding on your property and to prevent mosquito bites, follow the four D's:

- DRAIN standing water around the house weekly since it's where mosquitoes lay eggs, including: tires, cans, flowerpots, clogged rain gutters, rain barrels, toys and puddles.
- DUSK and DAWN are when mosquitoes that carry the virus are most active, so limit outdoor activities or take precautions to prevent mosquito bites.
- DEET is an effective ingredient to look for in insect repellents. Always follow label instructions carefully.
- DRESS in long sleeves and pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

If there is a significant mosquito problem in San Mateo County, contact the District at (650) 344-8592.

For more information on West Nile Virus and other district services, visit us on the web at:
www.smcmad.org.

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