



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

1351 Rollins Road
Burlingame, California 94010-2409
PH: (650) 344-8592
FAX: (650) 344-3843
www.smcmad.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 11, 2010

Contact: Chindi Peavey: (650) 344 - 8592 *32

**FIRST SQUIRREL TESTS POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN
SAN MATEO COUNTY IN 2010**

San Mateo, CA – A dead eastern gray squirrel collected from San Mateo on July 28, 2010, tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). This is the first indicator of WNV in San Mateo County in 2010. In 2009, a total of one dead bird (Redwood City) and zero squirrels tested positive for WNV in the county.

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, Laboratory Director for SMCMVCD.

Some birds, like crows, are highly susceptible to West Nile Virus. Reports of dead birds or tree squirrels 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 recently dead birds and 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.

To report 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.

#####