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A dead bird collected in Woodside tested positive for West Nile virus, the county’s first confirmed case this year which a mosquito expert said may have come earlier this season because of the warm weather.

A Woodside resident reported the dead hawk June 11 and the San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District announced yesterday it was infected with the virus. Technicians are now setting mosquito traps in the area to determine if the infected bird is an isolated incident or indicative of a wider infection circulating in the environment, said Angie Nakano, vector ecologist and acting laboratory director.

“We don’t take it as a cause for alarm but it is a reminder for residents to protect themselves,” Nakano said.

Nakano said San Mateo County is pretty lucky to not have had the infection clusters of other counties. Between 2004 and 2011, the county has recovered 38 dead birds and 12 squirrels that tested positive. The virus has been confirmed in 16 California counties.

The virus can’t be spread person to person or from the dead bird to a human. However, humans can contract the virus through the bite of an infected mosquito.

The chance that any one person is going to become ill from a single mosquito bite remains low, according to the Centers for Disease Control. The risk of severe illness and death is highest for people over 50 years old although people of all ages can fall ill.

San Mateo County has had no documented cases of humans infected since 2005, said Health System spokeswoman Robyn Thaw.

The virus is present at a low level year round but definitely peaks in summer, Nakano said.

“The mosquitoes breed faster and the virus itself replicates faster in warm weather,” Nakano said.

Typically, the county would see incidents later in the year but Nakano said the recent spurt of extra warm weather may have played a role.

To prevent mosquito bites and breeding, the district reminds the public to remember the “Three Ds” — drain standing water because that is where mosquitoes lay eggs; wear proper clothing and repellent during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes bite; and apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridan, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535.

The mosquito district asks people to report dead birds or tree squirrels to the West Nile hotline at www.westnile.ca.gov or calling 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473). More information on the virus is available at www.smcmad.org and mosquito problems specific to San Mateo County can be reported to the district at 344-8592.