

District Services

The San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District is an Independent Special District serving thirteen cities and unincorporated areas in San Mateo County. The District provides the following free services to our residents:

- Mosquito surveillance and control
- Mosquitofish for backyard fishponds
- Insect and tick identification
- Ground-nesting yellowjacket control
- Vector-borne disease surveillance
- Community education

The District strives to protect public health in an environmentally responsible manner.

"An independent Special District working for you since 1916"

For more information regarding mosquitoes, their biology or their control, please contact:



San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District

1351 Rollins Road
Burlingame, CA 94010

Phone: 650.344.8592

Fax: 650.344.3843

Email: aporshnikoff@smcmad.org

www.smcmad.org

San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District

West Nile Virus



"An independent Special District working for you since 1916"

Tel: 650.344.8592

What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne virus. WNV is common in parts of Africa, Europe, and Asia. It was first detected in the United States in 1999.

WNV is carried in mosquitoes. It can cause sickness in humans, horses, and birds.

Most people infected with this virus do not get sick. A small percentage of people will show symptoms, including fever, rash, and headache, to meningitis, encephalitis, and death.

People get the virus from being bitten by an infected mosquito. The virus is not contagious (transmitted from person to person).

answers to common questions

- Q. Is the West Nile Virus found in San Mateo County?**
- A. Possibly. West Nile virus was recently detected in California. SMCMAD is working hard to protect our citizens when the virus arrives in our county.
- Q. Can you get the West Nile virus from another person?**
- A. No. West Nile virus can only be contracted through the bite of an infected mosquito.
- Q. Can you get the West Nile Virus from birds?**
- A. There is no evidence that a person can get the virus from handling live or dead infected birds or other pets. West Nile virus can only be contracted through the bite of an infected mosquito.
- Q. What happens if you're infected with the West Nile virus?**
- A. Most infected people show no symptoms or have mild symptoms of disease. Mild symptoms include fever, headache, and body aches, often with a skin rash and swollen lymph glands. Symptoms can last 2 or more days. After infection, it is assumed the individual acquires lifelong immunity.
- Q. How fatal is this disease?**
- A. Approximately 10% of the symptomatic cases result in death. Fatalities are more likely in people over the age of 50, or immunocompromised individuals.
- Q. What is the treatment?**
- A. There is no known cure or available vaccine for West Nile fever. However, the symptoms can be lessened through proper medical attention.

What is California doing to protect us?

Your Mosquito Abatement District and health agencies are working together to protect our residents:

Prevent mosquitoes from developing.

SMCMAD keeps a close eye on mosquitoes in San Mateo County! Our certified technicians routinely monitor and control mosquito sources.

Encephalitis case surveillance. Health officials are also keeping a close watch on meningitis and encephalitis cases in humans and horses.

Sentinel bird testing. Over 200 flocks of chickens are placed throughout the State and are tested routinely to detect virus activity.

Mosquito surveillance. The District regularly monitors mosquito populations for mosquito activity.

Mosquito testing. Mosquitoes are collected and tested for the presence of the virus.

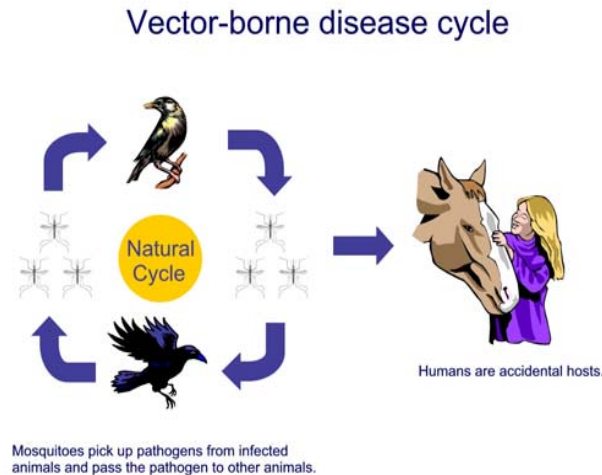
Dead bird testing. Health officials are collecting and testing dead birds for WNV.



Culex pipiens, the common house mosquito.

How is the West Nile virus spread?

The West Nile virus is spread by mosquitoes.



The West Nile virus lives in a bird-mosquito cycle. Mosquitoes feed on infected birds, and in turn infect other birds. Sometimes, these infected mosquitoes feed on other animals such as humans. Humans and horses are known as "dead-end hosts": we don't produce enough virus in our bodies to re-infect mosquitoes. Only a small percentage of mosquitoes are actually infected with the virus.

In the United States, birds, humans, and horses can become very sick when infected with the virus. Dogs and cats are also "dead-end hosts" and cannot re-infect mosquitoes.

A vaccine is available and recommended for horses. Please contact your veterinarian.

How can I keep my family safe?

Birds, horses and humans are infected with WNV from being bitten by an infected mosquito. Preventing mosquitoes from developing around your home will benefit the entire neighborhood!

- If you are experiencing mosquito problems, please call our office. Our specially trained staff are experts in finding mosquito sources.
- Empty out or throw away all containers that can collect water, such as paint cans, tarps, flower pots and tires.
- Keep your ornamental ponds stocked with mosquitofish. Call our office at (650) 344-8592 to have free fish delivered to your home.
- Don't over-water your lawn. Over-watering leads to standing water, which will produce mosquitoes!
- Make sure your doors and windows have screens and are in good repair. Seal any other gaps
- Insect repellants containing the active ingredient DEET are effective against mosquitoes. Always use repellant according to the instructions on the label!

Please contact the San Mateo County Public Health Department at (650) 573-2346 for more medical information about WNV.

What do I do if I see a dead bird?

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE! Please help our surveillance program by reporting dead birds to our office immediately at:

(650) 344-8592

or

1-877-WNV-BIRD

We are especially interested in the following:

- Birds that are dead for less than 24 hours. The virus cannot be detected after a certain period.
- Crows, ravens, scrub jays, stellar jays, magpies, sparrows, finches, and red-tailed hawks.
- Birds that do not show obvious signs of decomposition.
- Birds that have not been infested with maggots.

If you are unsure of any of the above conditions, please report the bird anyway, as our trained staff will determine if the bird is suitable for testing.

Please do not touch the bird. SMCMAD will arrange for pickup and laboratory testing for WNV when appropriate.

