

District Services

The San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District is an independent Special District serving San Mateo County. The District provides the following free services for our residents:

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

Our mission is to safeguard the health and comfort of the citizens of our District through a planned program to reduce mosquitoes and other vectors.

"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 and Vector Control District

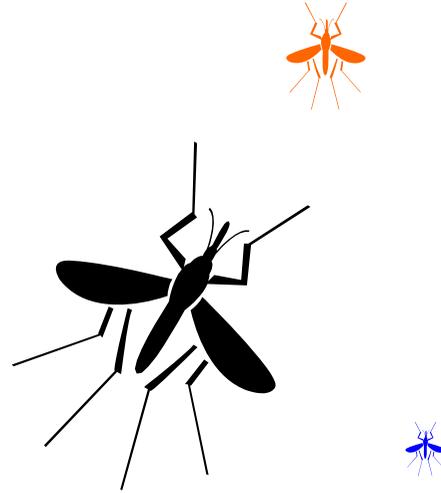
1351 Rollins Road
Burlingame, CA 94010

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www.smcmad.org

West Nile Virus

Important Facts and Safety Tips



Protect yourself and your family

San Mateo County
Mosquito and Vector Control District

(650) 344-8592
www.smcmad.org

What is West Nile Virus?

The West Nile virus is carried and spread by mosquitoes. It can cause sickness in humans, horses, and birds.

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

The most common source of infection is through the bite of an infected mosquito.

The best way to protect yourself and your family is to get rid of mosquitoes! Read on for more facts and tips.

answers to common questions

- Q. Has West Nile Virus been found in San Mateo County?**
A. Yes. West Nile Virus has been found in San Mateo and in every county of California.
- Q. Can you get the West Nile virus from another person?**
A. West Nile virus usually contracted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Occasionally, people may become infected through contaminated blood transfusions or organ transplants.
- 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 birds or other pets.
- Q. What happens if you're infected with the West Nile virus?**
A. Most infected people show no symptoms. Some people may develop mild to severe flu-like symptoms, including fever, headaches, body aches, rashes and swollen lymph glands.
- 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 human vaccine for West Nile fever. The symptoms can be lessened through proper medical attention.
- Q. Is there anything I can do to minimize my chances of being infected?**
A. Absolutely! Read on for more information...

What is California doing to protect us?

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

Prevent mosquitoes from developing. SMCMVCD 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 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 adult and larval mosquito populations for mosquito activity.

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

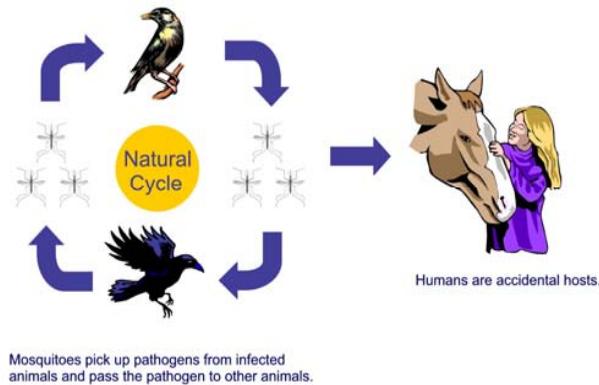
Dead bird testing. Health officials are collecting and testing dead birds for WNV.



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 for more information.

How can I keep my family safe?

Birds, horses and humans are infected with WNV from being bitten by an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes come from standing water. Eliminate standing water from around your home to prevent mosquitoes, and you will benefit the entire neighborhood!

- If you are experiencing mosquito problems, call our office. Some problems, like broken pipes under a house, are difficult to detect. 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 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.

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:

1-877-WNV-BIRD
(1-877-968-2473)



We are especially interested in the following:

- Crows, ravens, scrub jays, stellar jays, magpies, sparrows, finches, and red-tailed hawks.
- Birds that are dead for less than 24 hours.
- Birds that do not show obvious signs of decomposition.
- Birds that have not been infested with ants and maggots.

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

Birds that have been dead for more than 24 hours, have signs of trauma, infestation, or decomposition can be safely disposed of in your trash receptacle.