

The Battle Against West Nile Virus Has Begun!



The Battle Against West Nile Virus has Begun and Vector Control has Thrown the First **Punch!**



The 2011 version of the battle against West Nile Virus has officially begun. The first helicopter larvicide site drop of the season. These at Fenton Pond in Chula Vista. The mixture kills mosquito larvae, mosquito carrying west Nile virus that become more active with the warm weather.

Despite recent cooler temperatures, adult mosquito populations have been increasing in recent weeks. Additional larvicide applications will be conducted at four week intervals or as needed at various wetlands throughout the county.

The County of San Diego Vector Control Program contractor applies mosquito larvicide by helicopter to wetlands in an effort to reduce mosquito population and the risk of West Nile Virus (WNV). Female mosquitoes can lay up to 200 eggs at a time in the still water found in wetlands. These eggs hatch into larvae which feed on organic material. Larvicides are made from bacteria that are specific to mosquito larvae and will not harm other wildlife. This results in the efficient elimination of larvae before they can develop into biting adults which can spread diseases such as West Nile Virus.

Since West Nile virus reached the West Coast in 2003, San Diego County has used helicopters, backpack blowers, mosquito-eating fish, public education, Internet notifications, and more to protect the public.

"We want to get the West Nile Virus under control here in San Diego. These disease have been spreading through the Country in the last decade and is in San Diego from few years ago. We have 37 cases on 2008 and in 2010 drop to zero" said Eric McDonald, M.D. San Diego County Deputy Public Health Officer

Controlling mosquito abundance is essential in preventing the spread of West Nile Virus and other mosquito-borne diseases. West Nile Virus is a mosquito transmitted disease that has its peak occurrence during the warm summer months. The symptoms of WNV include: headache, fever, nausea, fatigue, skin rash or swollen glands. About one in 150 people infected with WNV develop more severe symptoms, such as meningitis, encephalitis, or myelitis. If you think you have symptoms consistent with WNV, contact your health care provider.



"So far, our efforts have paid off, said County Supervisor Greg Cox, "Last year, there wasn't a single reported human case of West Nile virus in San Diego County. But this is no time to relax. As we all know, diseases can strike anywhere, anytime if we let down our guards. We've just had a very wet winter, which means better breeding for the mosquitoes that can carry West Nile virus."

Cox said the County would continue to do its part at the County's 2011 West Nile virus season kickoff event. Helicopters and backpacks will continue to drop and shoot larvicide into local ponds and water sources. The County will keep looking

for green pools, continue to give out free mosquito-eating fish, and visit schools with West Nile virus posters and educational materials.

But the public also needs to help, County Environmental Health officials said, by remembering and acting on this phrase: "Prevent, Protect, Report."

County officials also said the public can sign up to receive text messages to get the latest West Nile virus updates over their cell phones. All they have to do is text the word PEST to the number 75309 from their cell phones. For more information about West Nile virus and how to protect yourself, you can also call (858) 694-2888 or visit:

SDFightTheBite.com

FIGHT theBite!



BEAT WEST NILE VIRUS

Get the facts and join the fight!

- Use mosquito repellent when outdoors from dusk to dawn
- Dump standing water around your home
- Report green swimming pools and dead birds

🔴 Prevent!

⚠️ Protect!

📞 Report!

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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Vector Control Program