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VECTOR CONTROL
Frequently Asked Questions

What does the Nevada County Vector Control program do?

The program consists of a surveillance system that monitors and responds to any vector-borne disease that can be passed from animals to people, including but not limited to:

➢ West Nile Virus
➢ Plague
➢ Hantavirus
➢ Rabies
➢ Tick borne diseases, such as Lyme Disease, etc.

Mosquito control is a main focus of this program with staff monitoring the county for West Nile virus activity by collecting deceased birds for testing to be done by the state and by drawing blood from chickens to check for any disease activity. The program also provides mosquito management by request where a Vector Technician looks for physical, biological and larvicide treatment solutions for property owners. Close collaboration with the State Public Health Biologist and the Nevada County Agriculture and Public Health Departments are essential to locate the source of a potential outbreak, provide surveillance, and conduct public outreach and education.

What is West Nile Virus and what are the symptoms?

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease that was originally found in Africa, and as of 1999 has moved to the United States. Approximately 80% of people do not develop any symptoms, however about 1 in 5 will get flu-like symptoms that last for a few days, with fatigue and weakness that can last for weeks or months. In a very small percentage of people, <1%, severe neurological illness, such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissue) may occur. They may last several weeks or become permanent, *however this happens in roughly 1 in every 150 people.*
Please click here for more information regarding West Nile Virus.

How do people get West Nile Virus?

The main way that people contract WNV is a bite from infected mosquitos.
WNV cannot spread through touching.

How can I reduce the risk of getting West Nile Virus?

There are three main ways to reduce the risk of being infected by WNV:
➢ **Use insect repellant:** DEET, picaradin or oil of lemon eucalyptus is recommended. Click here for more information.
➢ **Protect yourself most DAWN and DUSK:** mosquitos are more likely to bite during early morning and evening, so make sure you wear proper clothing and repellant if outside during these times.

> - **Drain standing water:** mosquitos lay eggs on standing water, therefore it is important to eliminate or drain all standing water sources around homes and properties.

***Currently, there is no vaccine available for WNV.**

Are my animals at risk of getting West Nile Virus?

Cats and dogs can get infected the same way humans can, however most are resistant and rarely become ill. Horses are more susceptible than cats and dogs. Click here for more information on WNV and horses.

What is Lyme disease and how can I protect myself from it?

Lyme disease is a bacterial disease that is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, and a characteristic skin rash shown here ⟶ If left untreated, infection can spread to the joints, head and nervous system. It is rare to contract Lyme in California, only 83 cases in 2015, however, please refer to the following to avoid contact with ticks:

> - Avoid direct contact with ticks by walking in center of trails and avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter
> - Repel ticks on skin and clothing   **For more information on preventing tick bites, click here.**
> - Properly remove ticks from body

To read more on Lyme disease, please visit the CDC – Lyme Disease website.

What other information can the Vector Control program provide for me regarding vector borne diseases?

Please refer to our webpage on our vector control program to learn more about what we do and get additional information.