Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 5, 2011

WEST NILE VIRUS ACTIVITY CONTINUES

INDIO, CA, OCTOBER 5, 2011: The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District received confirmation from the Center for Vectorborne Diseases (UC Davis) of four new West Nile virus (WNv) positive mosquito samples in the Coachella Valley. The mosquito samples were taken from traps located in Cathedral City, Mecca, and areas southeast/ southwest of Mecca. District staff will continue its intensified mosquito and WNv surveillance, larviciding, and public awareness in these areas, in an effort to reduce the number of adult mosquitoes. At this time, the District will not be conducting any ground ultra low volume (ULV) applications.

This year there have been 38 confirmed WNv positive mosquito samples and seven sentinel chickens positive for WNv in the Coachella Valley. In 2010, the District had 67 confirmed WNv positive mosquito samples from across the valley, by this point in the season.

WNv was first detected in 2003 in the Coachella Valley. In 2004, a resurgence of the virus resulted in seven non-fatal human cases, 75 positive mosquito samples and six

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dead birds. Since 2005 in the Coachella Valley, WNv has caused three human deaths, 11 non-fatal human cases and the District has detected 400 positive mosquito samples.

WNv is transmitted to humans and animals the bite of an infected mosquito. Not all species of mosquitoes are capable of transmitting the virus. Of those that can transmit the virus only a small percentage are actually infected with the virus. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Most individuals who are infected with WNv will not experience any illness. Others will have only mild symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. However, young children, the elderly or individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing more severe symptoms when infected. WNv causes illness and death every year, however many cases are never tested and confirmed by physicians.

The District continues its extensive surveillance, prevention, and treatment programs throughout the Coachella Valley and urges residents to help reduce mosquito breeding sources by inspecting their backyards and neighborhoods for standing water sources at least once a week.

Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:

- Avoid outdoor activity at dusk and dawn.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent according to label instructions.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.
- Report swimming pools and ornamental ponds that are not being maintained. Keep ornamental ponds and neglected pools free of excess vegetation.
- Contact the District for free mosquitofish to place in your ornamental pools, neglected pools or any other container with standing water that can potentially breed mosquitoes
- Contact the District if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work.

Contact the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District at 760-342-8287 or 1-888-343-9399 to report mosquito problems, request mosquito fish, and report neglected pools or standing water. You can visit us online at www.cvmvcd.org to obtain more information and submit service requests.

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