



Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

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Mosquitoes Test Positive for St. Louis Encephalitis

This is the first sign of mosquito virus in the Coachella Valley for 2020.

INDIO, CA - Mosquitoes collected from traps in Thermal tested positive for St. Louis Encephalitis (SLEV). This is the first mosquito sample in 2020 to test positive for the virus in the Coachella Valley. Traps were located near Orchid Court and Avenue 62.

The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District is increasing mosquito control technicians in the area to look for breeding sites and will post virus notice signs in communities located near the trap location. Staff will also carry out mosquito control treatments as necessary in the surrounding area in an effort to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further transmission of the virus.

"Residents across the valley need to protect themselves from mosquito bites," said Tammy Gordon, Public Information Officer for the District. "Avoid spending time outdoors at dawn and dusk. If you have to be outdoors at these times, wear long sleeves and apply repellent with ingredients like DEET or other EPA registered ingredients."

People can get SLEV from the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are infected when they feed on birds infected with the virus. While most people will not experience any illness from this virus, others may have flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. Few people will need to be hospitalized but in rare cases the disease can be fatal. People over the age of 50 and individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of suffering severe symptoms. Anyone with symptoms should contact their health care provider.

"It's your personal responsibility to protect your neighborhood and family from mosquitoes," said Jeremy Wittie, General Manager of the District. "While we continue to expand our efforts and explore new ways to survey and control mosquitoes, each of us must make eliminating mosquito breeding sources as routine as buckling up when we get in our cars."

The best line of defense in reducing mosquito numbers is to eliminate standing water where mosquitoes can breed. Remove water-holding containers from around your home and neighborhood. Drain areas where water can collect such as low lying landscape areas. Pet dishes should be wiped out weekly, and plant saucers thrown out.

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