



## COACHELLA VALLEY MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

📍 43-420 Trader Place, Indio, CA 92201 📞 (760) 342-8287 📠 (760) 342-8110  
🌐 [www.cvmvcd.org](http://www.cvmvcd.org) ✉ [CVmosquito@cvmvcd.org](mailto:CVmosquito@cvmvcd.org) 🌐 @cvmosquito 🐦 @CV\_mosquito

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# PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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#### CONTACT:

Jill Oviatt  
Public Information Manager  
(760) 342-8287 or (760) 289-9298  
[joviatt@cvmvcd.org](mailto:joviatt@cvmvcd.org)

### MOSQUITOES TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS IN PALM SPRINGS

*Residents urged to take precautions against mosquito bites as virus activity continues in the Valley*

**INDIO, CA, MAY 17, 2019:** Two samples of mosquitoes collected from a trap in Palm Springs tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). These are the first samples of mosquitoes to test positive for the virus in Palm Springs this year. The positive samples came from a trap located near Mesquite Avenue and Gene Autry Trail. The mosquito samples were tested at the Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District laboratory.

District staff will post disease notification signs in communities located in the area where the mosquitoes were trapped and will intensify mosquito surveillance with an increase in traps. Technicians will also carry out larval and adult control as necessary in the surrounding area in an effort to reduce the number of mosquitoes and interrupt further virus transmission.

“Just one bite from an infected mosquito can make a person sick,” said Jennifer Henke, District Laboratory Manager. “This is why we urge everyone to cover up and use repellent at dawn and dusk when virus-carrying mosquitoes are the most active.”

WNV is transmitted to humans via the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes are infected when they feed on birds carrying the virus. Most individuals infected with WNV will not experience any illness.

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Others will have flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache and body aches. In severe cases, people will need to be hospitalized, and in rare cases the disease can be fatal. Young children, people over 50 years old, or individuals with lowered immune systems are at greater risk of experiencing severe symptoms when infected. Anyone with symptoms should contact their health care provider.

This brings the total number of WNV-positive mosquito samples to 16 in 2019. WNV-positive mosquitoes have been collected in Coachella, Indio, and Thermal in the past week.

Community commitment to removing standing water sources both inside and outside the home is critical to controlling mosquitoes in the Coachella Valley.

**Prevent mosquitoes around your home:**

- Inspect yards for standing water sources and drain water that may have collected under potted plants, in bird baths, discarded tires, and any other items that could collect water.
- Check your rain gutters and lawn drains to make sure they aren't holding water and debris.
- Clean and scrub bird baths and pet watering dishes weekly.
- Check and clean any new potted plant containers that you bring home because they may have eggs. Some mosquito eggs can remain viable in dry areas for months.

**Prevent mosquito bites:**

- Avoid going outside in the hours around dawn and dusk when mosquitoes that can transmit West Nile virus are most active.
- Wear EPA registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label).
- Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, socks and shoes when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure window and door screens are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

Please contact the District at (760) 342-8287 to report mosquito problems, request mosquitofish, and report neglected pools or standing water where mosquitoes breed. Dead birds should be reported to the Californian Department of Public Health at (877) 968-2473 or online at [http://westnile.ca.gov/report\\_wnv.php](http://westnile.ca.gov/report_wnv.php). Visit us online at [www.cvmvcd.org](http://www.cvmvcd.org) to obtain more information and submit service requests. For the latest statewide statistics for WNV activity, please visit <http://westnile.ca.gov>.

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