

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public health officials take precautions against West Nile Virus

(Las Vegas, Nev., - September 4, 2003) – The Clark County Health District and Clark County Vector Control are taking a proactive and preventive approach to address the potential public health affects of West Nile Virus in Southern Nevada.

The two agencies, working in concert with the Nevada Department of Agriculture/Animal Disease Laboratory (NDOA/ADL), are conducting an active surveillance program in Clark County. The surveillance program, which includes the reporting and testing of some dead birds, mosquito pools, and random blood sampling of wild horses, began in the Spring of 2001, and all tests to date have come back negative for presence of the virus.

Additionally, more than 19,000 mosquitoes throughout Nevada have been tested and results for West Nile Virus were negative.

“While Southern Nevada’s dry climate helps to keep mosquito populations in check it is still important for people to protect themselves from mosquitoes,” said Glenn Savage, environmental health director for the health district.

“People should wear insect repellent if there is mosquito activity and eliminate areas and containers of standing water around their homes. This is especially important at this time in our community when we are experiencing increased rainfall and flooding,” said Savage.

There are 17 species of mosquitoes in Clark County, including several species that have the potential to carry the virus. As a precautionary measure, Clark County Vector Control routinely surveys and treats known breeding sites in Clark County from April through October each year.

“Any person who notices mosquitoes in an abandoned swimming pool should contact our office so that we can begin to remediate the problem,” said Richard Hicks, Clark County Vector Control.

For more information about West Nile Virus contact the Clark County Health District at (702) 383-1251, access its website at www.cchd.org, or contact Clark County Vector Control at (702) 455-7543 or access the county website at www.co.clark.nv.us.

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