ST. LOUIS ENCEPHALITIS VIRUS POSITIVE MOSQUITOES FOUND IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

(STOCKTON, CA) – San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District’s (District) mosquito-borne disease surveillance program discovered St. Louis Encephalitis virus (SLE) in a group of collected mosquitoes found in zip code 95240. “This is the first find of St. Louis Encephalitis in San Joaquin County since a human case identified in 1973,” said Aaron Devencenzi, Public Information Officer of the District. The SLE virus is in the same family of flavivirus as West Nile virus. Over recent years SLE has been detected in several areas of California. “With this finding, it is important that people remove standing water around homes and protect themselves from mosquito bites. Mosquito prevention is everyone’s responsibility,” said Devencenzi.

The District will continue monitoring and testing mosquitoes for SLE. Similar to West Nile virus (WNV), birds are the reservoir host once exposed to a mosquito with SLE. Humans are a dead-end host, unable to infect other humans through casual contact. Symptoms are also similar to WNV. Additional information on symptoms and mortality rates associated with SLE are found at the California Department of Public Health or the Center for Diseases Control websites. Currently, WNV is very active in the mosquito population throughout San Joaquin County.

With the recent high temperatures, the mosquito life cycle speeds up, and so does the replication of the virus within their bodies. Therefore, people must protect themselves from mosquito bites. Take these precautions to reduce the risk of WNV infection and other mosquito-transmitted diseases:

- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property.
- According to label instructions, when outdoors, apply insect repellent containing EPA-registered active ingredients, including DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Repellents keep mosquitoes from biting people.
- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, at dawn and dusk, and especially for the first two hours after sunset.
- When outdoors in cooler weather, wear long pants, loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts, and other protective clothing.
- Exclude mosquitoes from your home with tight-fitting screens on doors and windows.
- Contact your veterinarian for information on vaccinating equine against WNV.
- Report daytime biting mosquitoes or significant mosquito infestations to San Joaquin County Mosquito & Vector Control District at www.sjmosquito.org, (209) 982-4675, 1-800-300-4675.
- Report dead birds to 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473) or www.westnile.ca.gov.

For additional information, request service, or sign up for the District’s spray notification system, go to www.sjmosquito.org or call (209) 982-4675. Follow us on Facebook @SJmosquitoandvector for tips and informative posts.

SJC Mosquito & Vector Control District: http://sjmosquito.org/Mosquito-Diseases-Prevention/WEE-SLE-Encephalitis
California Department of Public Health: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/SLE.aspx
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/sle/

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