

Aerial search for mosquito breeding sites starts Saturday

Staff Reports (ChicoER.com)

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OROVILLE — An aerial campaign to detect un-maintained swimming pools and other "backyard breeders" of mosquitoes will start Saturday.

The hope is to eliminate early season mosquitoes to prevent larger populations in the summer, when West Nile virus is most active, according to Matt Ball, manager of Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District.

"There are hundreds of un-maintained swimming pools throughout the county and with the continuing high foreclosure rate, the district expects even more this year," Ball said.

Other potential breeding areas include boats holding water, ponds without circulation, unused tires, un-maintained hot tubs, and other man-made objects that hold water.

The district is partnering with Mobile Infrared Systems to conduct the surveillance.

The Butte County Sheriff's Office helicopter is also conducting some of the flights.

Public health officials expect mosquito-transmitted West Nile virus to be a serious public health concern in California this year. The virus was found in Butte County and 35 other counties in the state last year.

Residents are urged to search their property and eliminate standing water sources and to report mosquito breeding areas and mosquito problems to the district at 533-6038, 342-7350, or www.BCMVCD.com.

Protect yourself from mosquitoes by avoiding peak mosquito activity times and wearing repellent.