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For Immediate Release

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BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH CONFIRMS ADDITIONAL HUMAN CASES OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN 2013

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — Three new human West Nile Virus (WNV) cases have been reported in Butte County. One of the new cases was hospitalized in serious condition with a WNV brain infection. The new cases live in Chico and the South County area. All the new cases are in patients than 55 years and older. Butte County now has a total of 4 reported cases for the 2013 year. As of August 14, 2013, California has had 37 human WNV cases reported from 16 different counties. WNV risk is high in Butte County and has been increasing.

Dr. Mark Lundberg, Butte County Health Officer, emphasizes, “We know that WNV is circulating in our community and will continue to circulate for the next couple of months. It is very important that residents ramp up mosquito prevention efforts and avoid being bitten, as this is how the virus is spread to humans. With very little effort, WNV infection can be prevented by practicing the 3 D’s.”

1. DEET – Use proven insect repellent like DEET. Other repellents that are recommended are picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Always use according to label instructions. Repellents keep the mosquitoes from biting you. DEET can be used safely on infants and children 2 months of age and older.
2. DAWN AND DUSK – Mosquitoes bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear proper clothing and repellent if outside during these times. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep mosquitoes out. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.
3. DRAIN – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, rain gutters and pet bowls. If you know of a swimming pool that is not being properly maintained, please contact the local Mosquito and Vector Control District at (530) 342-7350 or (530) 533-6038.

According to Matt Ball, District Manager for the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District, Butte County is at an elevated risk for contracting WNV from mosquitoes because of the increasing mosquito populations and the detection and wide-spread distribution of WNV throughout the county. He states that “It’s imperative that residents assist with the prevention of mosquito breeding by inspecting and eliminating all standing water from their properties.”

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For more information or to report a dead bird or squirrels visit www.westnile.ca.gov or call 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473). Residents can also track West Nile Virus activity in Butte County and neighboring counties on the website.

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For further information contact:

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Butte County Public Health Department

Our Mission: To protect the public through promoting individual, community, and environmental health.