

Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, October 15, 2019



Contact:
Heather Hyland, Public Information Officer
Phone: (714) 971-2421
E-mail: HHyland@ocvector.org

First Mosquitoes to Test Positive for Saint Louis Encephalitis (SLE)

Garden Grove, CA. The Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District (OCMVCD) has confirmed the first mosquito samples to test positive for Saint Louis encephalitis (SLE) in Anaheim and Westminster. The mosquitoes were collected from Old Bolsa Chica Road in Westminster and in the area of Dale Ave and Orange Ave in Anaheim. OCMVCD has not seen SLE positive mosquito samples in these areas since 1987. OCMVCD staff will conduct additional mosquito surveillance and canvass the area to look for additional mosquito breeding sources.

“This is the first detection in these areas in three decades. We are encouraging residents to take the necessary precautions to keep themselves and their families safe. The best way to protect yourself from mosquito bites is to discard any standing water around your home to eliminate potential breeding sources,” said OCMVCD Public Information Officer, Heather Hyland.

Saint Louis encephalitis (SLE) is a viral disease spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. Most people infected with SLE virus have no apparent illness. Initial symptoms of those who become ill include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, and tiredness. Severe neuroinvasive disease (often involving encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain) occurs more commonly in older adults. In rare cases, long-term disability or death can result. There are no vaccines to prevent nor medications to treat SLE. There are no confirmed cases of human infection at this time in Orange County.

Follow the tips below to prevent mosquito bites:

- Apply mosquito repellent to exposed skin before going outdoors; reapply as recommended
- Wear repellent containing DEET®, Picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus
- Close all unscreened doors and windows to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home or space; repair broken or damaged screens
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and opt for lighter-colored clothing

-More-

Around the home, eliminating breeding sources for mosquitoes is critical:

- Dump and drain containers filled with water at least once a week
- Clean and scrub bird baths and pet water bowls weekly
- Dump water from potted plant saucers

Orange County residents are urged to report unusual numbers of mosquitoes to OCMVCD. For more information, please contact the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District at (714) 971-2421 or (949) 654-2421, or visit www.ocvector.org.

###