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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER ANNOUNCES FIRST CONFIRMED  
HUMAN CASE OF WEST NILE VIRUS IN THE COUNTY THIS YEAR**

A 52 year old male has been infected with West Nile Virus. This is the first confirmed human case in Riverside County this year. The patient lives in Western Riverside County and is recovering at home after being hospitalized.

The last case was in 2011, when there were a total of 7 confirmed cases. The last reported death from the virus in Riverside County was 2008.

The virus is transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Health officials emphasized that the risk of serious illness to humans is low. Most of those infected will not experience any illness. Elderly individuals and those with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk for serious illness.

"This first confirmed West Nile virus case reminds us that we must take precautions to protect ourselves and our families from mosquito bites," said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, interim Public Health Officer for Riverside County. West Nile virus activity is greatest during the summertime. Individuals can reduce their risk of mosquito-borne diseases by taking these precautions:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk.
- When outdoors, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing.
- Apply insect repellent according to the label instructions.
- Make sure that the doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property that can support mosquito breeding.

- Contact your local mosquito and vector control agency if there is a significant mosquito problem where you live or work (for the location of local agency/district by using zip codes see the state department of health's website).

A comprehensive surveillance program to monitor for WNV in Riverside County has been established by the Department of Environmental Health's Vector Control Program, local mosquito and vector control districts and other state and local agencies. The program includes testing suspect cases in humans and horses, capturing and testing certain species of mosquitoes with potential for disease transmission, testing sentinel chickens and evaluating dead birds.

Anyone who becomes ill after exposure to mosquitoes should contact their health care provider. The Disease Control Office can be reached at (951) 358-5107 for more information on West Nile Virus.

Information about WNV is available at:

- <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>
- <http://www.rivco-diseasecontrol.org/Services/WestNileVirus.aspx>

Dead birds can be reported on the state's website or by calling toll-free 1-877-WNV-BIRD (1-877-968-2473).

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