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DATE: September 15, 2021
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Stanislaus County - The East Side and Turlock Mosquito Abatement Districts (MADs) have received confirmation that a mosquito sample from Stanislaus County has tested positive for St. Louis Encephalitis virus (SLEV). SLEV is related to the West Nile virus (WNV) and is transmitted via the bite of Culex mosquitoes, the same mosquitoes that transmit WNV.

Like WNV, most people who become infected with SLEV will never feel sick. Most people who do feel sick will have mild flu-like symptoms; a small number of people will have severe disease with headache, confusion, disorientation, and dizziness. Seizures, paralysis, coma, and sometimes death may occur. Severe disease is more likely in people who are older and those with weakened immune systems.

“The discovery of positive mosquito pools is a reminder that we need to continuously prevent mosquito breeding in our community. There is no specific treatment for SLEV or WNV, so it is very important that people protect themselves and their families from mosquito bites,” advises Dr. Julie Vaishampayan, Stanislaus County Public Health Officer. “We ask everyone to use mosquito repellents to protect themselves and their loved ones from mosquito-borne viruses, especially when they are outdoors.”

Statewide, there have been 26 mosquito samples that have tested positive for SLEV this year. They are from 6 counties including Fresno, Imperial, Madera, Riverside, Stanislaus, and Tulare. There have been no reports of SLEV in people this year; during 2020, there were four reports of people with SLEV in California; one of these was from Stanislaus County.

WNV detection in mosquitoes is increasing; a total of 133 mosquito samples have tested positive this year in Stanislaus County. WNV has also been confirmed in two dead birds.

The MADs will continue with their surveillance programs identifying mosquito breeding sources and mosquito-borne disease activity. They will treat according to their surveillance results. The districts anticipate more SLEV and WNV detections in the coming months and would like to remind residents they can help by taking the following precautions:

- **Dump or drain** standing water. These are places mosquitoes like to lay their eggs.
- **Defend** yourself against mosquitoes by using repellants containing DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.
- **Avoid** being outdoors at **dusk** and **dawn**. These are the times when WNV carrying mosquitoes are generally most active.
- **Report Neglected Swimming pools** to your local mosquito abatement district.
- Use tight-fitting door and window **screens** to keep mosquitoes from entering your home.

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For additional information or to request service, residents should contact their local District:
Stanislaus County residents:

- North of the Tuolumne River contact:
 Eastside Mosquito Abatement District at (209) 522-4098 (www.eastsidemosquito.com).
- South of the Tuolumne River contact:
 Turlock Mosquito Abatement District at (209) 634-1234 (www.turlockmosquito.org).

Resources for Additional Information on St. Louis Encephalitis are:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH),
 - Surveillance data: <https://westnile.ca.gov/>
 - Disease information: <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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