



**Riverside County  
Public Health**

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September 10, 2015

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## **Riverside County man who died tests positive for West Nile Virus**

A 77-year-old man who recently died tested positive for the West Nile Virus, said Dr. Cameron Kaiser, public health officer. The individual lived in western Riverside County.

The man died late last month after a brief hospitalization and the illness was reported this week. The patient, who is not being identified, had underlying health issues that may have contributed to his death.

The last West Nile Virus-related death in Riverside County occurred in 2008.

There have been 16 human cases of West Nile Virus so far this year in Riverside County, which is one more than the number reported in all of 2014. There were 35 confirmed human cases in 2013.

“Our sympathies are with the family during this difficult time,” said Kaiser. “The tragedy provides us with a sad reminder how serious this illness can be and the importance of taking preventative actions.”

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 individuals who are infected with the virus will not experience any illness. Elderly individuals and those with compromised immune systems are at greatest risk for serious illness.

Health officials urge residents to protect themselves by taking these steps:

- Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active, especially at dawn and dusk, and wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing outside.
- Apply EPA-registered insect repellent that contains DEET.
- Make sure 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, such as old tires, buckets, flower pots and toys that can support mosquito breeding.

The Department of Public Health, in cooperation with its vector control district partners, maintains a map to show where cases have been reported, where the virus has been found, and where mosquito control operations, such as spraying are occurring. The site is updated weekly during the West Nile peak season and additional information from vector control agencies will be added as it is received.

The map can be found at <http://www.rivcoph.org/Home/WestNileMap.aspx>

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.