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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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West Nile Virus in Amador County

Sutter Creek, CA – Amador County Public Health confirms the first cases of West Nile virus (WNV) in Amador County in 2018. Outbreaks of WNV occur each summer in the United States and are most commonly transmitted to humans and animals through a mosquito bite from a mosquito harboring the virus. Public Health officials remind the community to take preventative measures to avoid mosquito-borne disease.

“The appearance of West Nile Virus in Amador County is not a surprise,” said Dr. Rita Kerr, Amador County Health Officer. “WNV has been detected in California and surrounding counties for the past few months. It is important that people be aware there are measures they can take to minimize exposure to mosquitos and reduce the chance of becoming infected.”

Prevent mosquito bites by practicing the “Three D’s”:

1. **DEET** – Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 according to label instructions. Repellents keep the mosquitoes from biting you.
2. **DAWN AND DUSK** – Mosquitoes that carry WNV bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear repellent at this time. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. 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, and rain gutters. Mosquito Dunks are another prevention measure that are dropped in stagnant water, bird baths or ponds to form a barrier which prevent mosquitos from breeding.

“We are still in a peak period of West Nile virus transmission in the state so we urge everyone to take every possible precaution to protect themselves against mosquito bites,” cautioned State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith.

The risk of serious illness to most people is low. However, some individuals -- less than 1 percent -- will develop serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis. People 50 years and older have a higher chance of getting sick and are more likely to develop serious symptoms. Those with diabetes and/or hypertension are at greatest risk for serious illness.

To date in 2018, WNV has been detected in 21 California counties. For more information on WNV, visit California’s West Nile virus website: <http://www.westnile.ca.gov/>