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To promote and protect the health and well-being of Kings County residents through education, prevention, and intervention.



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **FIRST WEST NILE VIRUS RELATED DEATHS OF 2022 IN KINGS COUNTY**

HANFORD – The Kings County Department of Public Health (KCDPH) has received confirmation of the first two West Nile virus (WNV) associated deaths of Kings County residents in 2022. The first case of WNV infection in Kings County was reported on July 15, 2022 and there have been a total of three infections, including two deaths, in Kings County this year.

“We are deeply saddened by the passing of these Kings County residents due to West Nile virus” said Heather Silva, Assistant Director of KCDPH. “This is a tragic reminder of how serious WNV can be and we encourage residents to protect themselves from mosquitoes especially by eliminating sources for mosquitoes to propagate.”

Most people who are infected with WNV have no symptoms or only mild non-specific flu-like illness. However, in some individuals, especially the elderly, the disease can cause severe neurologic illness. Symptoms of severe disease include fever, headache, stiff neck, rash, joint pain, disorientation, and altered level of consciousness.

Residents can contact the Kings Mosquito Abatement District (KMAD) if they have a mosquito problem, report a neglected swimming pool (green pool), or if they need assistance in eliminating mosquito breeding sources. The District will also provide mosquito fish for swimming pools, back yard ponds, and horse troughs free of charge. To contact the District please call (559) 584-3326. Residents may also request services through their website at [www.kingsmosquito.net](http://www.kingsmosquito.net).

Kings County Department of Public Health (KCDPH) recommends that individuals protect against mosquito bites by practicing the “Three Ds”:

1. DEET – Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon, eucalyptus, or Insect Repellent 3535 (IR3535) according to label instructions. Repellents keep the mosquitoes from biting you. Insect repellents should be used according to label instructions for children.



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2. **DAWN AND DUSK** – Mosquitoes that transmit WNV usually bite in the early morning and evening, so it is important to wear proper clothing and repellent if outside during these times. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
3. **DRAIN** – Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, by emptying flowerpots, old car tires, buckets, and other containers. If you know of a swimming pool that is not being properly maintained, please contact your local mosquito and vector control agency.

Additional information regarding West Nile virus may be found at:

<https://westnile.ca.gov/>