## **TERRY SCHMIDTBAUER**

Director (707) 784-6765

JAMES BEZEK Assistant Director (707) 784-6765

**TREY STRICKLAND**Environmental Health Manager (707) 784-6765

## **DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**



675 Texas Street, Suite 5500 Fairfield, CA 94533-6342 (707) 784-6765 Fax (707) 784-4805

www.solanocounty.com

## **Environmental Health Division**

## California West Nile Virus Surveillance

Dead Bird or Squirrel Reporting

West Nile Virus is a mosquito borne disease. Birds and squirrels play an important role in maintaining and spreading West Nile Virus. Mosquitoes acquire the virus from infected birds, and then transmit the virus to people. In order to obtain information on areas where people are at greater risk of exposure to West Nile Virus, the state performs surveillance of number and location of dead birds and squirrels and also performs laboratory testing on some dead birds and squirrels to confirm that West Nile Virus is present.

You are encouraged to assist in the efforts to detect and monitor West Nile Virus by calling the California Department of Public Health West Nile Virus Hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD (877-968-2473) if you find a dead bird or squirrel. You may also report on-line at: <a href="www.westnile.ca.gov">www.westnile.ca.gov</a>.

After you have reported a dead bird, you may be contacted to determine the condition of the bird and if it is suitable to be collected for West Nile Virus testing. All dead bird reports are used for surveillance purposes and are extremely valuable to the state even if the bird is not submitted for testing. If you have not been contacted within 24 hours after making your report, you may safely dispose of the dead bird in your trash. There is no evidence that West Nile Virus can be acquired by handling dead birds, but it is best not to handle the dead bird with your bare hands. Use gloves, a shovel, or a plastic bag to place the bird in a trash bag for disposal.

For more useful information on West Nile Virus, including how to reduce your risk of infection, please go to <a href="https://www.westnile.ca.gov">www.westnile.ca.gov</a>.