WEST NILE VIRUS FAQ
(FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

What is West Nile virus?

✓ West Nile virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease that is common in Africa, west Asia and the Middle East.

How does someone get West Nile virus?

✓ People usually get WNV from the bite of an infected mosquito. There is also evidence that WNV can be acquired via a blood transfusion or organ transplant from an infected donor.

What are the symptoms and treatment?

✓ Most people who are bitten by a mosquito with WNV will not get sick. People who do become ill may experience mild to moderate flu-like symptoms like fever, headache and body ache. It is estimated that less than 1% of the people who are infected with WNV become severely ill and require hospitalization. The elderly and immuno-compromised are particularly susceptible to illness caused by WNV.

How can you protect yourself?

✓ Avoid spending time outside at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are active. They are especially active for two hours after sunset.
✓ When outdoors and mosquitoes are active, wear long pants, long sleeve shirts and other protective clothing
✓ Apply insect repellent containing DEET according to label instructions.
✓ Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.
✓ Eliminate all sources of standing water that can support mosquito breeding.

How do I get more information on West Nile virus?

✓ California West Nile Virus Surveillance Center
  o  www.westnile.ca.gov
✓ Centers for Disease Control
  o  www.cdc.gov