



Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County

Environmental Management of Human Disease Vectors

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Invasive *Aedes* Mosquito Found in Santa Barbara County for the First Time

The Mosquito and Vector Management District of Santa Barbara County has confirmed the presence of the non-native *Aedes aegypti* mosquito in Santa Barbara County. Photos of a suspect mosquito caught at a home in the Hope neighborhood in Santa Barbara were submitted to the District's website by an alert resident. The suspect mosquito specimens were collected from the residence located near the intersection of N. La Cumbre Rd. and Foothill Rd. and tentatively identified as *Aedes aegypti* at the District laboratory. An additional specimen was collected from a trap set up at the residence where the mosquitoes were found and it was positively identified as *Aedes aegypti*, the yellow fever mosquito. Mosquito district staff currently are setting up additional traps, conducting property inspections, and passing out informational brochures in the surrounding neighborhood.

Aedes aegypti is native to Africa but has spread throughout many regions of the world. This mosquito was first detected in California in 2013 and since then has spread throughout southern California and the Central Valley. *Aedes aegypti* can transmit viruses such as Dengue, Zika and Chikungunya and the virus that causes yellow fever but, fortunately, these diseases are not locally transmitted in California. However, this mosquito can be extremely bothersome, biting both during the day and at night and can be found both indoors and outdoors. Residents in areas where the mosquito has become well established call them "ankle biters" due to their habit of biting around the ankles. *Aedes aegypti* prefer feeding on humans and stay close to human dwellings where they will lay their eggs in practically anything that contains stagnant water including buckets, tires, birdbaths, containers of all kinds, and plates under potted plants. They can even develop in water held in plants, such as bromeliads. *Aedes aegypti* mosquito larvae can complete their development in the amount of water that would fill a bottle cap. Residents are urged to remove all sources of stagnant water both inside and outside of the home and scrub the insides of the containers because the eggs can survive without water for many months.

"Public awareness of *Aedes aegypti* will be very important in slowing its spread and reducing the problems these mosquitoes cause," says Mosquito District General Manager Brian Cabrera. "Local residents can help "fight the bite" by eliminating the sources of water where they lay

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their eggs and develop as well as contacting the District if they suspect they are being bitten by these mosquitoes”.

Residents can protect themselves from biting by using repellents approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, keeping doors to the outside closed, and making sure their windows are fully-screened.

Information about *Aedes aegypti* and other mosquitoes can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes/about/life-cycles/aedes.html>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/InvasiveMosquitoesBrochure.pdf>