

# **2005-2006 GRAND JURY REPORT**

## **Riverside County**

### **Mosquito and Vector Control Services**

#### **Background**

Riverside County is served by five separate Mosquito and Vector Control organizations. Two are Special Districts (Northwest and Coachella Valley); one is a County department; one a department of the City of Riverside; and one a department of the City of Blythe. The organizations are, in order from west to east:

- The Northwest Mosquito and Vector Control District (NWMVCD) was established December 29, 1959 with headquarters in the City of Corona. It has a budget of \$2.5 million and a staff of 22 under the supervision of a forensic entomologist. It covers the County and city areas as shown on the attached West Nile Virus Activity report.
- The City of Riverside Vector Control/Mosquito Abatement (RVC) Division of the Public Works Department operates on a budget of approximately \$244,000. It employs two to three Vector Control Technicians and serves the area of the City not covered by the NWMVCD.
- The County Vector Control (CVC), a Division of the Environmental Health Department of the Riverside County Community Health Agency, has a budget of approximately \$818,000 and has ten employees under the supervision of the Director of Environmental Health. It covers the unincorporated area of the County not covered by the two Special Districts (including a large area between Blythe and the end of the Coachella Mosquito and Vector Control District), and contracts with the cities as listed on the attached West Nile Virus Activity report.
- The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (CVMVCD), established in 1928, has headquarters in the City of Indio. It operates on a budget of approximately \$2,400,000 and covers the areas listed on the attached West Nile Virus Activity report. It has a staff of 20 full-time and 14 seasonal personnel under the direction of a medical entomologist.

- The City of Blythe Vector Control (BVC) program is a part of the Public Works Department and has one full-time and one part-time vector control technician funded by Public Works budget.

The two Special Districts are funded by property taxes. County Vector Control is funded through the Community Health Agency. Both the City of Riverside Vector Control and the Blythe Vector Control are funded through the respective public works departments.

A significant disease prevention function of vector control is the detection, control and eradication of mosquitoes that transmit diseases including West Nile Virus. A recent concern of growing importance is early detection of Avian Flu.

## **Findings**

1. West Nile Virus cases for Riverside County, as of November 2005, are shown on the attached chart. Seventy-one percent of West Nile Virus cases were reported from the areas covered by the County Vector Control Division of the Environmental Health Department.
2. Complaints about mosquitoes between the Coachella Valley District and the City of Blythe are received by the Blythe office and submitted weekly to County Vector Control. The County then schedules control visits based upon the weekly reports and sends personnel and equipment, incurring costs for overnight stays and extensive mileage.
3. With five agencies, separate areas of responsibility and unclear geographic boundaries, the public is often confused about whom to call for assistance or to report vector activity.

## **Recommendations**

**Riverside County Board of Supervisors  
Riverside County Community Health Agency  
Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District  
Northwest Mosquito and Vector Control District  
Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)  
City of Riverside  
City of Blythe**

1. Conduct a study of vector control effectiveness throughout the areas covered by the five agencies. Based upon study results, consider the benefit to the County of dividing all vector control responsibilities between the two Special Districts (Northwest and Coachella Valley).
2. Conduct a survey and/or prepare a ballot measure for voters outside the present Special Districts to determine their willingness to support the additional cost for Special District coverage.
3. If accepted by the voters, merge County Vector Control into the two Special Districts, or form a third Special District. Such a merger or expansion should offer any non-participating cities the option to contract with the appropriate Special District.

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
WEST NILE VIRUS ACTIVITY  
BY VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT**

As of November 2005

<b>Vector District</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>	<b>Areas Covered</b>
City of Blythe	<b>0</b>	Blythe
Vector Control – City of Riverside	<b>7</b>	Riverside
Coachella Valley MVCD	<b>5</b>	Desert Hot Springs, Rancho Mirage, Indian Wells, Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Indio
Northwest MVCD	<b>4</b>	Lake Elsinore, Glen Ivy, Corona, Norco, Arlington/Arlanza, Canyon Crest, La Sierra, Woodcrest Mira Loma, El Cerrito, Jurupa, Glen Avon, Highgrove, Rubidoux, Pedley, and Home Gardens
Vector Control – Riverside County Environmental Health	<b>72</b>	Beaumont, Banning, Hemet, Nuevo, Moreno Valley, Cherry Valley, Sun City, Hemet, Wildomar, Canyon Lake, Menifee, San Jacinto, Yucaipa, Temecula, Romoland, Homeland, Quail Valley, Winchester and Cabazon.
Area without current vector control	<b>13</b>	Perris and Calimesa

Case count provided by the Director, Disease Control, Riverside County Community Health Agency.

**Report Issued: 06/28/06**  
**Report Public: 06/30/06**  
**Response Due: 09/27/06**