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Non-Native *Aedes Aegypti* Mosquito Detected in Gilroy

The County of Santa Clara Vector Control District will begin treating the area to eradicate the invasive insect, which is also present in a residential area of East San José

GILROY, CALIF. — The County of Santa Clara Vector Control District has discovered a non-native *Aedes aegypti* mosquito in a residential area of Gilroy. The County is monitoring the area and will soon begin treatment to eradicate the aggressive species of mosquito, which is known to spread diseases such as dengue and yellow fever, before it can establish a permanent population.

The discovery in Gilroy comes as the district continues its effort to eliminate the day-biting insect from a neighborhood in East San José.

The district has identified one female *Aedes aegypti* (pronounced AY-dees ah-JIP-tie) mosquito so far in the area surrounding Hanna Street and W. 10th Street in Gilroy. District staff are carrying out a thorough eradication plan in the surrounding area, trapping adult mosquitoes, inspecting properties to find mosquito larvae and habitat (i.e., standing water), and treating any larvae they find with pesticide. The district will escalate its mosquito-control methods as needed to include backpack spraying, barrier spraying, and wide area [larvicide spraying](#), which is done with the use of truck-mounted equipment and would be conducted in a series of treatments.

It's important that residents allow district staff to access their properties to check for mosquitoes and treat them as needed. The district urges residents in Gilroy and East San José to inspect their properties for standing water, which provides breeding habitat for mosquitoes, and remove it.

If *Aedes aegypti* gains a foothold in Santa Clara County, it will not only threaten public health but also affect our quality of life, as these mosquitoes are highly aggressive and active during the day, unlike native mosquito populations, which are most active in the morning and evening, when temperatures are cool.

“We are doing everything we can to prevent *Aedes aegypti* from becoming established in Santa Clara County – and we need the public’s help,” said Edgar Nolasco, director of the County of Santa Clara Consumer and Environmental Protection Agency. “It’s important for residents in the affected area to cooperate with district staff and allow them to inspect their properties for mosquitoes and mosquito habitat.”

For residents who worry about their privacy, the district emphasizes that staff who enter residential properties are not authorized to do anything besides check for mosquitoes and provide mosquito control as needed. The inspections are provided at no cost to residents.

Officials from the Vector Control District and County Public Health Department will hold a community meeting on Thursday, Sept. 26, to inform residents about the treatments and answer their questions. The meeting will take place at 6 p.m. in the cafeteria of Gilroy High School, located at 750 W. 10th St. in Gilroy.

Though it is not native to California, *Aedes aegypti* is present in [19 counties](#) throughout the state, mostly in the Central Valley and Southern California. It has the potential to transmit several viruses, including those that cause dengue, chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever. These viruses are not endemic to California, but there have been occasional cases of these diseases being transmitted by travelers returning from parts of the world where the viruses are prevalent.



The invasive species is about a quarter-inch in size with black and white stripes on its back and legs. It feeds almost exclusively on humans and does not fly long distances, venturing fewer than 500 feet from where it hatches.

Aedes aegypti is aggressive and bites at any time of day. These mosquitoes are “container breeders,” preferring to lay their eggs just above the water line in small, artificial sources of water

such as buckets, pet dishes, fountains and bird baths, plant pots and saucers, and old tires. Once laid, the eggs can last for more than a year without water.

The public plays a critical role in controlling the spread of this mosquito. Residents should look around their property and dump out even the smallest amount of standing water. Cleaning and scrubbing bird baths, pet dishes and other containers is a good way to remove any lingering *Aedes aegypti* eggs, which are about half a millimeter in size and look to the naked eye like tiny bits of dirt.

Residents should also:

- Properly screen [rain barrels](#), cisterns and [irrigation drains](#) to prevent mosquito access.
- Fix leaky water faucets and broken sprinkler heads and avoid [overwatering](#) lawns and plants.
- Ensure window and door screens are in good condition with no holes or tears and are tight-fitting.
- Make sure the water level of swimming pools is adequate for proper circulation and filtration.

To protect yourself from mosquito bites:

- Apply [insect repellents](#) containing EPA-registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus, always following label instructions.
- Wear long-sleeve shirts, pants, socks and shoes when mosquitoes are most active.
- Make sure your window and door screens are in good condition.

Residents experiencing mosquito bites during the day should report them immediately to the Vector Control District at (408) 918-4770 or vectorinfo@cep.sccgov.org. The district encourages residents to email photographs of mosquitoes with black and white stripes to the same address.

If you are sick with fever, headache and joint or muscle pain after returning from an area where dengue, chikungunya, yellow fever or Zika occurs, contact your doctor, and stay indoors as much as possible to avoid mosquito bites and help prevent the possible spread of the virus.

To reduce the population of *Aedes aegypti*, the district uses pesticides that are approved by the Federal and State environmental protection agencies and are widely used by vector control agencies throughout California.

The California Department of Public Health tests the mosquitoes the district traps for any viruses. To date, none of the viruses that potentially can be transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes have been transmitted in Santa Clara County.

The County Public Health Department monitors for the occurrence of viruses transmitted by *Aedes aegypti* and any unusual diseases in partnership with local medical providers and laboratories, who are required to report certain diseases and conditions to Public Health.

For more information or frequently asked questions on *Aedes aegypti*, visit the district's [invasive mosquitoes](#) webpage or the California Department of Public Health's [Aedes aegypti and Aedes albopictus webpage](#).

ABOUT THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA

The County of Santa Clara government serves a diverse, multicultural population of 1.9 million residents in Santa Clara County, making it more populous than 14 states in the United States. The County provides essential services to its residents, including public health protection, environmental stewardship, medical services through the County of Santa Clara Health System, child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, park services, libraries, emergency response to disasters, protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and many other public benefits.

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