



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

San Mateo County Residents Reminded of Risk of Tick-Borne Illness

Burlingame, CA – 13 December 2018 – Officials at San Mateo Mosquito and Vector Control District (SMCMVCD) remind residents that winter is the season for the western black-legged tick (*Ixodes pacificus*). This tick is the primary vector for Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses in San Mateo County. “Most people think of mountain lions and coyotes as the major risks when enjoying outdoor activities. We’d like to remind people that some real threats come in much smaller packages,” said Laboratory Director Angie Nakano.

Results from the District’s 2017/2018 tick-borne disease surveillance program indicate that up to 3% of ticks collected in San Mateo County are infected with bacteria capable of causing illness in humans. This is consistent with previous years’ data for San Mateo County.

The District recommends that residents and visitors continue to take precautions against tick bites when engaging in outdoor activities. Basic precautions against tick-borne illness include:

- Wear light-colored clothing and long sleeves and pants
- Tuck in clothing to keep ticks off your skin
- Use an EPA-registered tick repellent
- Walk in the center of the trail, and avoid contact with brush, tall grass, and leaf litter
- Check carefully for ticks after outdoor activities
- Remove ticks promptly and correctly; never crush, burn, smother, or twist an attached tick
- Consult a health professional if unable to completely remove a tick, or if a rash or fever develops after exposure to a tick

“Low risk doesn’t mean no risk,” said the District’s Public Health Education and Outreach Officer, Megan Sebay. “It only takes one bite from one infected tick to make you sick, so it makes sense to take precautions against tick bites.”

For more information on ticks in San Mateo County, contact the San Mateo Mosquito and Vector Control District at (650) 344-8592 or visit www.smcmvcd.org/ticks.

Contact:

Megan Sebay, MPH
Public Health Education and Outreach Officer
msebay@smcmvcd.org
1351 Rollins Rd.
Burlingame, CA 94010
(650) 344-8592

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