



County of Riverside
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

P.O. BOX 7909 • RIVERSIDE, CA 92503-7909

STEVE VAN STOCKUM, DIRECTOR

March 18, 2015

Riverside County
NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Dottie Merki, Program Chief
Riverside County Environmental Health
(951) 358-5172

County health officials offer hantavirus reminder after four mice test positive

The California Department of Public Health confirmed that 4 out of 17 mice collected in January by Riverside County Environmental Health officials from San Timoteo Canyon in the Norton Younglove Preserve near Beaumont have tested positive for hantavirus. There have been no documented human cases of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome from Riverside County.

Hantavirus may be transmitted by inhaling tiny droplets contaminated with the virus from mouse droppings and urine or from contact with mice. Infected mice do not appear to show any signs of illness and it is important to keep from stirring-up materials while cleaning any mouse-infested areas in and around homes, especially in rural areas. Residents can take the following steps to reduce their exposure to hantavirus:

- Ventilate affected structures for several hours before cleanup by opening doors and windows.
- Use rubber gloves.
- Apply a 10% solution of bleach or household disinfectant to contaminated surfaces and allow at least 15 minutes' contact time before removal.
- Clean the affected area with a sponge or mop. **DO NOT SWEEP OR VACUUM.**
- Double-bag any dead rodents and clean-up materials (newspaper, paper towels, etc.) securely in plastic bags and seal.
- Before removing gloves, wash gloved hands in disinfectant or with soap and water.
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water after removing gloves. Dispose of gloves and clean-up materials with other household waste.

Individuals concerned about illness should contact their health provider. For more information on hantavirus and the Vector Control Program, contact the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health office in Hemet at (951) 766-9454 or use the Department website at www.rivcoeh.org/Programs/vector .