



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

San Mateo County Residents Reminded of Tick-Borne Illness Risk

Burlingame, CA – 4 December 2017 – 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*), also known as the deer tick. This tick is the primary vector for Lyme disease and other common tick-borne illnesses.

Results from the District's 2016/2017 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. "Although the risk of encountering an infected tick in our area is much lower than on the east coast, it is still very possible to contract Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, or other diseases from ticks in this county," said San Mateo Mosquito and Vector Control District Laboratory Director Angie Nakano.

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

"I would never discourage anyone from enjoying the outdoors," said the District's Public Health Education and Outreach Officer, Megan Sebay. "Fortunately a few simple precautions can prevent most tick bites and keep your risk of tick-borne illness low."

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.

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