

For Immediate Release

# West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District Introduces Novel Technique to Combat Invasive *Aedes* Mosquitoes

*X-Ray Sterilized Male Mosquitoes to be Released Starting August 28th*

## Ontario, August 28

Pilot releases of X-Ray sterilized male *Aedes aegypti* will begin this week, furthering the District's comprehensive approach to control *Aedes* mosquitoes, often referred to as "ankle biters." Locally collected mosquitoes are reared in-house by the District, separated by sex, and males are irradiated and packaged to be ready for release.

## Additional Novel Tool for Reducing Mosquitoes

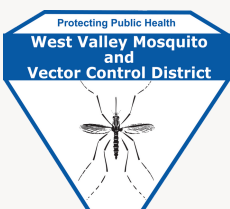
Since 2017, *Aedes aegypti* have increased 45-fold in our cities. In response, the West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District has increased its surveillance and public education programs, as well as *Aedes* specific source reduction and increased deployment of In2Care attract and kill traps throughout the district.

*Aedes* mosquitoes are primarily small-container breeders, using places like flowerpots, unused tires, and yard drains. Often these cryptic sources can go unnoticed, producing hundreds of mosquitoes. Sterile males released in a neighborhood will mate with local female mosquitoes and the resulting eggs will be unviable, providing a chemical-free way of reducing mosquitoes. Importantly, female mosquitoes typically mate only once in their lifetime. Therefore, any eggs laid by the local female mosquito throughout her lifetime will be unviable as well. "There is no worry in releasing male mosquitoes because males don't bite, and cannot spread disease," says Dr. Solomon Birhanie, Scientific Director for the West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District.

The releases will target selected *Aedes* hotspot sites for now, but Dr. Birhanie is confident that this method of mosquito reduction will quickly become an indispensable tool for areas with high mosquito populations.

Board President and Ontario Mayor Paul Leon commented, "These sterile male releases are the culmination of the tireless efforts of the District staff to help control and minimize the populations of these aggressive, day-biting mosquitoes and provide our residents with the highest quality of life."

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## West Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

*Protecting Public Health Since 1983*

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