



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2004-III-06]

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WEST NILE VIRUS CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVE; 7 OF 10 TAKING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Phoenix, Arizona, July 21, 2004. The public information campaign to lift awareness of the spread of the West Nile Virus in Arizona appears to have been very successful. The proportion of adults in the state aware of the virus has risen to 98 percent and includes 73 percent who say they consider themselves well informed about it.

And they may, in fact, be pretty well informed: 70 percent of Arizona adults have already adopted preventive measures that have been widely publicized by public health officials and the media, including implementing strategies to keep from getting bitten and using other strategies to try and reduce the availability of habitat in which mosquitos breed.

Notwithstanding the success of the campaign in lifting public awareness of the virus and understanding of the things that one can do to protect self and family, three-quarters of the public think it a very low probability that they will be bitten by a virus-carrying mosquito. For this reason, it may be important as a public health strategy to keep the public aware of the incidences and geography of where the virus is being found.

The most common strategies in use by the public are to use insect repellents containing DEET (three in ten say they use such chemicals), eliminating standing water from their yards (20%) and staying indoors during the evening hours when mosquitos are most active (17%).

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 701 adults across Arizona conducted between July 1st and July 8th, 2004, by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit www.brcpolls.com to read this and other recent polls.

Even in Arizona's blistering summer weather, some elect to wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants when outdoors (7%) and less than five percent say they have gone to the extreme of spraying their yards to curb mosquito presence and breeding. About ten percent say they pursue other strategies such as burning insect repellent candles, installing window screens or using devices which are designed to trap and kill mosquitos.

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While most of the population are taking measures to protect themselves from mosquito bites, roughly three in ten do nothing at all. Of these, the great majority simply believe “It will never happen to me” – a viewpoint that rises sharply among men and young adults. Finally, a handful (2%) believe they do not need to worry because “mosquitos never bite me,” a figure that jumps to eleven percent among non-Caucasian and non-Hispanic adults.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2004-III-06) is based on 701 telephone interviews with adults conducted from July 1st through July 8th, 2004 throughout Arizona. In the overall sample, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.8 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

ENCLOSED: Statistical data for reference.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
RMP 2004-III-06

For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results.

“What, if anything, do you do these days to protect yourself from being bitten by mosquitos?”

	STATEWIDE	MARICOPA	PIMA	RURAL
Use repellent containing DEET	29%	29%	22%	34%
Eliminate standing water in yard	20	21	25	14
Stay indoors at night	17	21	13	9
Wear protective clothing	7	8	5	6
Spray yard	3	2	5	5
Other strategies	10	9	13	12
No need, mosquitos never bite me	2	1	1	4
We do nothing – just take our chances	28	29	26	26

STATISTICAL DATA

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	<u>DO NOTHING/ TAKE OUR CHANCES</u>
TOTAL	28%
Men	37
Women	19
<u>AGE</u>	
Under 34	34
35 to 54	29
55 +	23

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*“Would you say you have heard a lot, some, only a little or nothing at all about a mosquito-borne virus called the West Nile Virus?”*

|                    | <u>JULY<br/>2004</u> | <u>AUGUST<br/>2002</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| A lot              | 73%                  | 44%                    |
| Some/only a little | 25                   | 45                     |
| Nothing at all     | 2                    | 11                     |

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“This summer, how likely do you think it is that you will be bitten by a mosquito carrying the West Nile Virus – very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely.”

	<u>STATEWIDE</u>	<u>MARICOPA</u>	<u>PIMA</u>	<u>RURAL</u>
Very likely	6%	7%	6%	5%
Somewhat likely	20	18	20	23
Not likely	74	75	74	72

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