



PROVIDER ALERT: Reminder to Report Coccidioidomycosis (“Valley Fever”)
April 24, 2018

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department (SBCPHD) would like to remind all providers that **Valley Fever is a reportable disease per Title 17 of the California Health & Safety Code and all cases (suspect, probable, and confirmed) should be reported via the CalREDIE Provider Portal.** In addition to complying with state laws, case reporting provides Public Health with accurate data on the concerning increase in Valley Fever across California. For questions on reporting, please call Disease Control at (805) 681-5280.

In February 2018, the SBCPHD became aware of concerns within the local healthcare community of a potential link between increases in Valley Fever cases and the Thomas Fire and 1-9 Debris Flow events. An investigation was initiated and data reviewed. There were 56 cases reported during the time period of both disasters (December 4, 2017- March 31, 2018). Interviews were conducted with 43 of these cases. Of the 56 patients whose data were reviewed, none were firefighters but one was a first responder who worked on the Thomas Fire. Most of the Valley Fever patients lived in North (47 cases, 85%) or Central (5 cases, 9%) Santa Barbara County with only four cases (7%) living in South County. More in-depth data from this investigation is posted on the SBCPHD website and can be found at <http://cosb.countyofsb.org/phd/epi/> under Data Reports.

The data from this investigation correlate closely with the epidemiology and seasonality of California’s statewide increases since 2015. The reasons for these increases are not completely understood but are thought to be related to heavy rains after the California drought. Environmental factors favorable to the fungus *Coccidioides* proliferation and airborne release might have contributed.

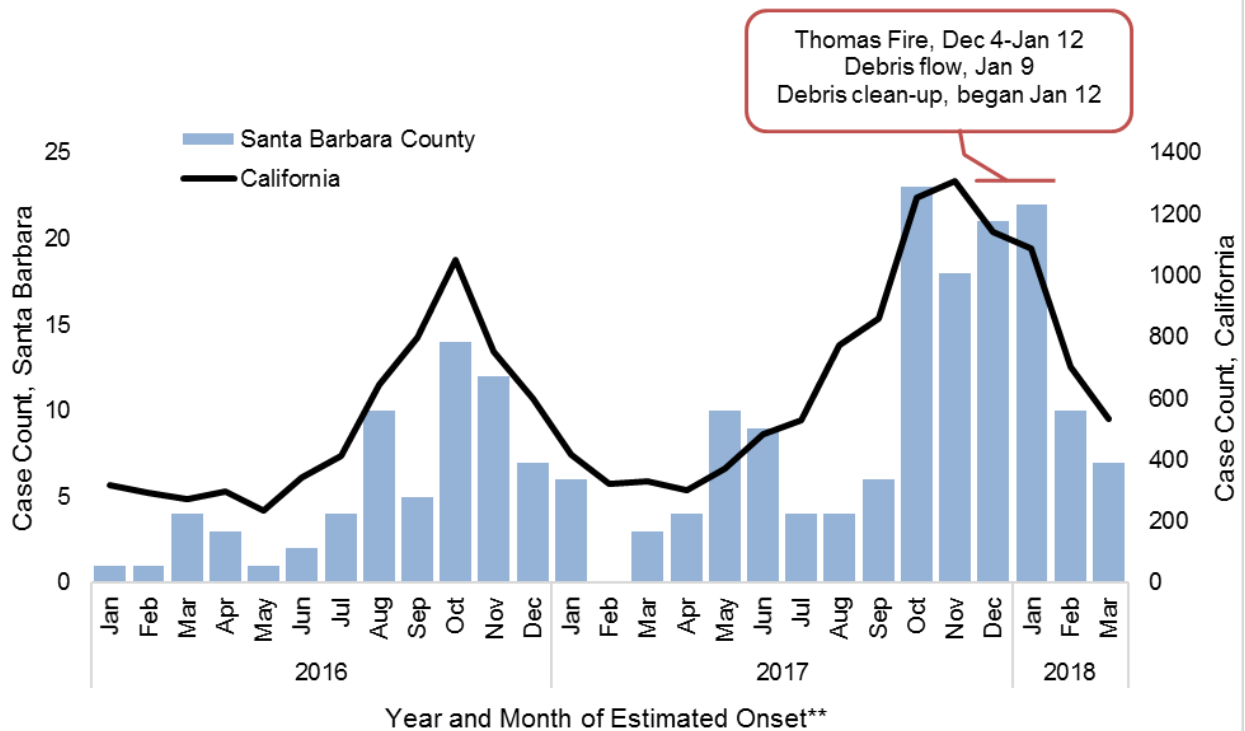
(<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6631a4.htm>)

The graph below shows both statewide and local data for reported Valley Fever cases.

This investigation only included residents of Santa Barbara County and does not reflect data for residents of the neighboring counties of Ventura or San Luis Obispo.

Statewide data on Valley Fever increases may be found at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CocciinCAProvisionalMonthlyReport.pdf>

Provisional* Numbers of Reported Valley Fever Cases by Month and Year of Estimated Onset†, Santa Barbara County and California



Note: Santa Barbara County and California case counts are shown on different scales in this graph (Santa Barbara County, left y-axis; California, right y-axis).

*Reported suspect, probable, and confirmed cases of Valley Fever reported as of March 31 of the following year for California and as of April 4 of the following year for Santa Barbara County.

†Estimated onset date is the date closest to the time when symptoms first appeared. For cases which date of onset was not recorded, the estimated onset date can range from the date of first appearance of symptoms to the date the report was made to Public Health; Reported via CalREDIE for Santa Barbara County Residents.

The cause of increasing Valley Fever cases is a concern to local and state Public Health agencies and will continue to be investigated. These investigations rely on timely and accurate data and are only possible when local providers report cases through the CalREDIE Provider Portal. This reminder is in response to a number of recent inquiries on whether Valley Fever is reportable. Providers are encouraged to report any previously unreported cases.

Thank you for the important role you play in protecting our community's health.