The admission came as officials were beginning the recovery process from Monday’s historic floods that swept through the Valley, leaving behind a county that now faces a future that will likely be marked by rainfall and flooding.

“Now is the time of year that mosquitoes breed,” said Dilone, the public health and entomologist for the county. “It’s definitely a concern.”

The Public Health Laboratory of Maricopa County Department of Public Health regularly monitors and tests for mosquitoes in the county. Mosquitoes are typically tested for West Nile, a virus that can be carried by the mosquito and spread to humans and animals.

For the past few seasons, the county has taken a proactive approach to combating mosquitoes, with traps set up throughout the county to monitor for the presence of the virus.

According to Dilone, the traps are important because they help public health officials determine the presence of the virus in the county and allow them to take preventive measures to protect the community.

“Last year, the traps were set up early in the season and we had a few positive results,” she said. “This year, we’re taking more precautions to make sure we’re prepared for any potential outbreaks.”

In the meantime, residents are encouraged to take steps to protect themselves from mosquito bites, such as using insect repellent and wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors.

“West Nile virus is a serious public health concern, and it’s important that everyone takes steps to protect themselves,” Dilone said. “By taking these simple steps, we can help prevent the spread of the virus and keep our community healthy.”

As the temperature rises, the risk of West Nile virus transmission also increases, according to Dilone. “The combination of warm weather and standing water creates ideal conditions for mosquitoes to breed,” she said.

Dilone also urged residents to check their property for standing water, such as in gutters, tires, and flower pots, and to drain it to prevent mosquito breeding.

“The small steps we take can make a big difference in reducing the risk of West Nile virus,” she said. “By taking these steps, we can make our community safer.”

The county has created a West Nile virus hotline for residents to report potential mosquito breeding sites. The hotline can be reached by calling 602-506-7777.

In addition, the county offers educational resources and information on how to protect themselves from mosquito bites and West Nile virus.

“By working together, we can keep our community healthy and safe,” Dilone said. “Let’s take these steps to protect ourselves and our loved ones.”

For more information on West Nile virus and how to protect yourself and your family, visit the Maricopa County Department of Public Health website at publichealth.maricopa.gov.

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D.S. WOODFILL
Desert Downpour

 lasts, which can include fever, muscle aches, and severe headaches, or it can manifest as meningitis, encephalitis, and encephalomyelitis, which can result in severe neurological damage.

The virus has been found in various areas across the country, including Arizona, where there have been several confirmed cases in recent years. In 2013, there were 11 reported cases of West Nile virus in Arizona, including one fatal case.

“West Nile virus is a serious public health concern, and it’s important that everyone takes steps to protect themselves,” Dilone said. “By taking these simple steps, we can help prevent the spread of the virus and keep our community healthy.”

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KENT ALLUCKER
THE REPUBLIC • azcentral.com

The news of notes in the desert came as a shock to many, particularly those who live near the areas where the storms occur. Many were quick to point out the positive aspects of the flood, such as the cleanup efforts and the opportunity to rebuild.

“We were able to do it all again,” said one resident of a home that was damaged in the flood. “It was a great opportunity to start fresh.”

As recovery efforts continue, many are looking forward to the future and the chance to rebuild their homes and communities.

“The flood was a tragedy, but it also showed us the resilience of our community,” said another local resident. “We’ll come back stronger than ever.”

For more information on how to help those affected by the flood, visit the Maricopa County Department of Public Health website at publichealth.maricopa.gov.

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