



City of Riverside Fire Department Training Division Safety Message



Division Chief: John Martinez .. 951-320-8185 ... Capt: Bill De La Hoya .. 951-320-8186



RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT EMS BUREAU AWARENESS ALERT

Snake Season

How to treat snakebite



This "Awareness Alert" will reference and quote the REMS Medical Director, Humberto Ochoa, M.D. from his June 20, 2007 letter addressed to Riverside County hospitals, fire departments, and other service providers. With the warmer weather here, we are already experiencing victims of snakebite. It is important to *attempt* to get a positive identification of the snake involved in the bite. Many times, this is not possible, but a quick interview of the victim or bystanders may provide valuable information that may lead to a positive identification. This becomes very important when a patient does not respond as expected to the "standard" antivenin.



Southern Pacific

This is Dr. Ochoa's direction regarding the treatment of snakebite victims.

"Appropriate treatment for snakebite in this county is to assist in keeping the victim calm and to transport the person to the closest hospital. Specialty center transport is *not* necessary as hospitals in Riverside County all keep an initial supply of anti-venom on hand, and several have large supplies in their pharmacies. Symptomatic treatment en route may include an IV, O₂, and perhaps respiratory or cardiac assistance.

Specific additional orders can be obtained through base hospital contact."



Red Diamond



Speckled



Sidewinder

Dr. Sean Bush from Loma Linda University Medical Center is quoted stating,

"The Southern Pacific has long been overlooked as one of the most, if not the most dangerous snake in Southern California or even all of California."

Shown in the upper right photo.



Mojave Green



Western Diamondback

The six species of rattlesnakes found in our county are pictured here

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Please stay alert and be safe out there.
Training Division