



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 25, 2012

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
SUWANNEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY

SUWANNEE COUNTY--This is to advise that there has been increased mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Suwannee County. Two horses have tested positive for West Nile Virus infection. **The risk of transmission to humans has been increased.**

Suwannee County Health Department reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes that may cause encephalitis disease. The health department continues surveillance and prevention efforts and encourages everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure by following the recommendations below.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember "**Drain and Cover**":

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER skin with clothing or repellent

- CLOTHING - Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- REPELLENT - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
 - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with 30 percent DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
 - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

Tips on Repellent Use

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children. Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing. If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the web site for Surveillance of Wildbird Die-offs located at <http://www.myfwc.com/bird/>. For more information, visit DOH's Environmental Public Health web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call the Suwannee County Health Department.