

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE ALERT IN EFFECT FOR WALTON COUNTY

-- Walton County confirms fourth human case of West Nile Virus --

WALTON COUNTY – The Walton County Health Department continues its mosquito-borne illness alert for Walton County, Florida. The fourth human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) has been confirmed in Walton County. The possibility that others may become infected with the virus remains extremely high, and the health department strongly encourages the public to continue to take precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes infected with WNV can bite and infect humans. About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop serious illness. Symptoms of West Nile Virus may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. Those individuals who develop a fever or other signs of illness following a mosquito bite should consult with their health care provider. Health care providers should contact either health department if they suspect an individual may be infected with a mosquito-borne illness.

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. The best preventive measure for residents living in areas infested with mosquitoes is to eliminate the places where the mosquito lays her eggs, primarily artificial containers that hold water. To prevent mosquitoes from living and multiplying around your home or business:

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. Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

Cover doors and windows with screens:

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

The Walton County Health Department, in conjunction with the Florida Department of Health will continue to perform surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses. For more information on West Nile Virus visit <http://www.cdec.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>. For more information, visit the Florida Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call the Walton County Health Department at (850) 892-8021.

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