



Charlie Crist
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**LEON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES
MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY**
--Medical director urges precautions against mosquitoes--

Tallahassee-- The Leon County Health Department announces that there has been increased mosquito-borne disease activity in Leon County. "We have had a confirmed human death due to Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE)," said Dr. Marjorie Kirsch, medical director, and, "**the risk of transmission of mosquito-borne viruses to humans is increased.**" A Leon County horse has also been recently diagnosed with EEE.

EEE virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. It isn't spread person to person. An average of six human cases of EEE are reported each year in the United States.

The Leon County Health Department reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes that may cause disease. Leon County Mosquito Control and the Leon County Health Department continue surveillance and prevention efforts and encourage everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure by following the Florida Department of Health (DOH) recommendations.

DOH advises the public to remain diligent in protecting themselves from mosquito bites by following the "5 D's," which are listed below:

- **Dusk and Dawn** – Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are biting.
- **Dress** – Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- **DEET** – Use repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) to help protect against being bitten by a mosquito. Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, IR3535 and permethrin are other repellent options.
- **Drainage** – Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, which is where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

Follow these tips for correct repellent use:

- Read label directions carefully for the approved usage before applying a repellent to skin. 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 3 years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than 2 months old.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Mosquito repellents containing picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 can also be applied directly on skin. Permethrin can be used on clothing.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- Infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting should be used over carriers when mosquitoes are present.

DOH also offers these tips for eliminating mosquito breeding sites around your home:



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- Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds so water can drain.
- Turn over or remove empty pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups after use.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- Pump out bilges on boats.
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
- Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

Most people who become sick from mosquitoes have mild symptoms like headache, fever, dizziness and fatigue, but more severe symptoms are possible. Anyone with severe symptoms should consult their primary care physician or seek immediate medical care. Physicians should contact the Leon County Health Department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. DOH laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health Web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call your local county health department.

Monitoring wild bird deaths can help officials track the spread of some mosquito-borne diseases. Anyone who discovers a dead bird is encouraged to report it on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's website at www.MyFWC.com/bird/.

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