

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



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Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

August 30, 2013

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For Immediate Release

## HEALTH ALERT : DENGUE FEVER MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE

### □ *Residents urged to continue with prevention methods* □

(Martin County, FL) This week the Florida Department of Health confirmed four additional cases of dengue fever, bringing the total to eleven locally acquired cases in the Rio and Jensen Beach area. Of the cases, seven are Martin County residents and four are St. Lucie residents.

Dengue Fever (pronounced den' gee) is a disease transmitted to humans by the bite of an infected mosquito, not person to person. In the Western Hemisphere, the *Aedes aegypti* (pronounced *edis egypt-tie*) mosquito is the main transmitter of dengue viruses. In some cases, the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito has also transmitted the disease. Both of these mosquitoes are found in large numbers in Martin and St. Lucie Counties. It is estimated that there are over 100 million cases of dengue worldwide each year.

Mosquito Control in Martin County is continuing to inspect and treat properties in the affected areas.

The Florida Department of Health continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include remembering “**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 DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
  - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

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

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

### **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.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) are generally recommended. Other US Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age-appropriate. 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.

For more information on what repellent is right for you consider using the EPA search tool to help you choose skin-applied repellent products:

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform>

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's website at

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or contact your local health department.

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