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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HENDRY COUNTY –MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY

HENDRY COUNTY--This is to advise that there has been increased mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Hendry County. Five sentinel chickens in the LaBelle area have tested positive for West Nile virus. **The risk of transmission to humans has been increased.**

The Hendry County Health Department reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes that may cause encephalitis disease. The Hendry County Health Department will continue with surveillance and encourage everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure by following the department of health recommendations.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to practice the “5 D’s”:

- **Dusk and Dawn** – Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood.
- **Dress** – Wear clothing that covers most of your skin.
- **DEET** – When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing up to 30 percent DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) are recommended. Other effective mosquito repellents include picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- **Drainage** – Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, where mosquitoes lay eggs.

To protect your horses from mosquitoes, you should.

- Consult with your veterinarian on getting your horses vaccinated for EEE and WNV.

Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites

- Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- 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.

The Florida Department of Health (FDOH) continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Please report dead birds via the web site <http://myfwc.com/bird/>. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit FDOH's Environmental Health web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call the Environmental Health Office at the Hendry County Health Department in LaBelle 863-674-4047 or Clewiston 863-946-0212.

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