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MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ALERT IS LIFTED FOR ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA



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Pensacola, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) has lifted the mosquito-borne illness alert for Escambia County, Florida. Surveillance data indicate that the risk of human infection has decreased.

Although mosquito-borne illnesses are less common in the winter months, Escambia County's Mosquito Control office has indicated continued reports of mosquito activity in the area. FDOH-Escambia recommends that visitors and residents of Escambia County, Florida continue to drain and cover to protect against being bitten by mosquitoes:

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.
- Rake and remove plant debris, especially leaves, which can harbor enough moisture to support mosquito reproduction.
- 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, not repellent, to protect children younger than 2 months old.

Tips for 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 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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended for 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.

The Florida Department of Health continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern Equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, chikungunya, and dengue. Please report dead birds via the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's website at <http://www.myfwc.com/bird/>. For more information, visit the Department's website at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html> or call your local county health department.

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