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FDOH-ESCAMBIA URGES RESIDENTS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES



Contact:

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Pensacola, Fla. – Recent heavy rains and flooding in Escambia County can lead to an increase in mosquitoes. The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) is urging all residents and visitors, especially those that are spending time outdoors, to protect themselves against mosquito-borne diseases, such as West Nile virus disease. The public should remain diligent in preventative measures like “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 to twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and keep 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 working in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- Repellent - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. See Tips on Repellent Use below for additional instructions related to children.
 - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 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 (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.

To determine which repellent is right for you, consider using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's search tool for 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, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, St. Louis Encephalitis, Malaria and Dengue. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Web site at www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/mosquito-borne-diseases/index.html or call your local county health department.

Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the website for Surveillance of Wild-bird Die-offs located at <http://legacy.myfwc.com/bird/default.asp>.

Florida Emergency Information Line: 1-(800)-342-3557

Public Information Emergency Support Function: (850) 921-0384

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