

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DUVAL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES MOSQUITO-BORNE
ILLNESS ALERT**

- Additional cases prompt continued protection efforts-

Jacksonville, FL -- The Duval County Health Department (DCHD) has continued its mosquito-borne illness alert for Duval County. Two additional human cases of West Nile virus (WNV) illness have been confirmed. The most recent cases involve a 66 year-old man and 50 year-old woman. Duval County has 28 confirmed cases of WNV for 2012. There has been one reported death associated with a confirmed case of WNV in Duval.

Approximately one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. Symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent. The state monitors animals as sentinels for WNV, to determine if any of the viruses are present in the community.

DCHD continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include the following "Drain and Cover" Tips:

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 are generally recommended. Other EPA-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 3 years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than 2 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.

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

Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the Florida Fish and Wildlife website at <http://www.MyFWC.com/bird>. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Public Health website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call DCHD at 904-253-1850.

The number of infections is published in the weekly Florida Arbovirus Surveillance Report, located at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/medicine/arboviral/Weekly-Summary.html>

For more information visit DOH's Bureau of Environmental Public Health Medicine's website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/Prevention.html>.

Information on how to reduce your risk while visiting areas with Dengue Fever can be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/dengue/travelOutbreaks/index.html>.

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