



Jeb Bush
Governor

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Secretary

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Recent rains from Hurricane Dennis make prevention essential
West Nile Virus Advisory Issued for Pinellas County

Surveillance data from Pinellas County Mosquito Control and the Pinellas County Health Department indicates an **increase in West Nile Virus (WNV) activity** in the county. Although no human cases of WNV have been reported in Pinellas County, four chickens maintained as a part of the county's early warning system for viral activity have tested positive for exposure to this virus in the past two weeks.

Recent summer rains and the weekend rain from Hurricane Dennis have caused an abundance of standing water throughout the county, and an increase in the county's mosquito population. Mosquitoes breed in standing water, and individuals are urged to follow the "**5 D's**" for prevention.

Dusk and **D**awn – Many mosquitoes bite between dusk and dawn. Limit time outdoors during these hours.

Dress – Wearing long sleeve shirts, long pants and socks sprayed with repellent while outdoors can help prevent mosquito bites.

DEET – Use an insect repellent containing DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) on exposed skin when you go outdoors. Products with concentrations of up to 30% DEET are generally recommended. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients listed on the product label.

Drain standing water. Don't give mosquitoes a place to breed. Even a tiny amount of standing water can be enough for a mosquito to lay its eggs. Check around your home to rid the area of standing water, which is where mosquitoes can lay their eggs

Also, make sure **window and door screens** are in good condition.

Elimination of breeding sites is another key to prevention. Here are some tips for eliminating mosquito breeding sites:

- Clean out eaves, troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill drainage holes in those used in playgrounds.
- 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. Drain unused swimming pools.
- 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.

(MORE)



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Symptoms of West Nile Virus infection may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. People who believe they may have West Nile Virus should contact their health care provider. Florida Department of Health (DOH) laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease. Physicians in Pinellas County should report suspected cases of West Nile Virus to the Pinellas County Health Department's Epidemiology Program at (727) 824-6932 or (727) 824-6900.

Florida residents are encouraged to report dead bird sightings at: www.wildflorida.com/bird or by calling their local county health department. To report dead birds locally, call the Pinellas County Health Department, Office of Environmental Health at (727) 507-4336.

For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit the Florida Department of Health (DOH) website at: www.doh.state.fl.us and select "Environmental Health" from the pull-down menu.

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The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com