



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
State Surgeon General

Public Information Bulletin

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT
Bill Dean
Environmental Health Director
Jackson County Health Department
(850) 482-9227

HORSE WITH EEE CONFIRMED IN JACKSON COUNTY

Public Urged to Protect Against Mosquitoes and Mosquito-Borne Viruses

Graceville- Due to a recently confirmed horse case of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE), located on Hwy 77 North of Graceville, the Jackson County Health Department is encouraging residents of and visitors to take a number of steps to protect themselves against mosquitoes.

The state monitors animals as sentinels for arboviruses, including Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) virus, West Nile (WN) virus and St. Louis encephalitis (SLE) virus, to determine if any of those three viruses are present in the community.

The Florida Departments of Health (DOH) and Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), along with other state and local agencies, are working to detect the viruses spread by mosquitoes to humans or animals. Mosquito-borne infections in people can cause headache, fever, dizziness, confusion, movement disorders and coma.

For more information on mosquito-borne diseases, please visit DOH's Environmental Health web site <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/arboviral/index.html>, the CDC web site www.cdc.gov, call the West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-888-880-5782, or contact the Jackson County Health Department (482-9227). Additionally, information on arboviruses can be found at the FDACS' web site, <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/ai/>, or by calling (850) 410-0900.

Prevention of Mosquito Bites and Mosquito-borne Illness

- Minimize outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- When outdoors and mosquitoes are present, wear shoes, socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt.
- Use mosquito repellent as directed by the manufacturer.
- Repair residential screening, including porches and patios, if tears or other openings are found.



- Eliminate mosquito breeding sites.

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.

Tips on Repellent Use

- Always **read label directions carefully** for the approved usage before applying a repellent to skin. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are other repellent options.
- 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.
- Infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting should be used over carriers when mosquitoes are present.
- **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.

Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)'s web site at <http://www.MyFWC.com/bird>, or call their county health department or local FWC office. You can reach the Jackson County Health Department's Environmental Health Section at 482-9227.