

Press Release
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The Lake County Health Department Issues Mosquito Borne Illness Advisory

-Two Horses Die from Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus-

Groveland – The Lake County Health Department received notification that two horses in the Groveland area have died from complications of the Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) virus. Neither of the horses had received their EEE vaccinations. It is the first reported equine (horse) deaths of EEE in Lake County this year. EEE is caused by a virus transmitted by mosquitoes and can infect humans. The risk of transmission to humans has been increased.

EEE is a disease of concern for the Florida horse community and Florida averages more than 70 reported cases of EEE each year. In years when conditions favor the spread of the EEE, the number of reported cases can exceed 200, with over 90% of affected horses dying.

EEE is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system of many species of animals but is most often detected in birds and horses. The disease is transmitted to horses, and sometimes humans, by mosquitoes that have become infected after feeding on birds, which are circulating the virus. This is known as the mosquito/bird transmission cycle. It is important to remember that the virus is not transmitted directly from an infected horse to other horses or people.

Lake County Mosquito Control and the Lake County Health Department continue surveillance and prevention efforts and encourage everyone to take basic precautions to help limit exposure to mosquitoes by following the health department's recommendations. The Lake County Health Department is also recommending horse and livestock owners contact their veterinarian about vaccinations against mosquito borne diseases.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember "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 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 doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios

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 read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent
 - Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and I R3535 are effective
 - Some repellents are not suitable for children
 - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old
 - Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended
 - Apply insect repellent to exposed skin or onto clothing but not under clothing
 - When 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 for 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 and always follow the manufacturer directions.

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, EEE, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria and dengue. Residents are encouraged to report dead birds at www.myfwc.com/bird.

For more information visit DOH's Environment Health website at www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html or call the Lake County Health Department at 352-253-6130.

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