

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 19, 2010

Contact: Chris Tittel

(305) 809-5653 / (305) 924-6839

Health department confirms dengue case in Key West, restates health advisory

The Monroe County Health Department restated its mosquito-borne health advisory on Monday, shortly after receiving confirmation of a new case of dengue in Key West.

This is the first reported case since the initial occurrence last summer. The last confirmed cases were in mid-October.

“We had hoped we’d be able to eliminate the disease from Key West and took every effort to do so,” Administrator Bob Eadie said. “However, the confirmed case is not totally unexpected in that once dengue fever has been established in an area, it is truly almost impossible to completely eradicate it. In cooperation with the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, all actions that can be taken locally are being continued and expanded.”

The confirmed case was in a 41-year-old Key West man who was initially seen at local military medical facilities on April 6. He was referred to Lower Keys Medical Center, which then referred him to a hospital in Miami. Dengue was diagnosed based on symptoms and later confirmed through lab tests.

The man, who has since fully recovered, reported no out-of-country travel within the past year.

The Monroe County Health Department has followed up with an investigation, the results of which strongly indicate that the infection was acquired locally.

“Given the facts at hand, the Monroe County Health Department cannot overemphasize the importance of Key West residents taking personal precautions to prevent contact with mosquitoes,” Eadie said.

Recommended precautions include:

- Dumping standing water in and around homes, where mosquitoes like to breed.
- Securing screens on windows and doors, ensuring no holes or tears where mosquitoes might gain entry.
- Using air conditioners whenever possible.
- Wearing DEET and other mosquito repellents.

Dengue can be transmitted through a bite from an infected *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, a species common to tropical and subtropical regions of the world. Symptoms include high fevers, aching bones, severe headaches, pain behind the eyes and rash and can last about a week. There is no vaccine or remedy for dengue. Anyone experiencing dengue-like symptoms should see a physician.