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## HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES ADVISORY

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**PASCO COUNTY, Fla.** – The Florida Department of Health in Pasco County (DOH-Pasco) today advised residents there has been an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Pasco County.

Several sentinel chickens have tested positive for Eastern equine encephalitis virus infection. As a result, the risk of transmission to humans has increased. Pasco County Mosquito Control District and DOH-Pasco continue surveillance and prevention efforts.

DOH-Pasco reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and to take basic precautions to help limit exposure.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to **Drain and Cover:**

### **DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.**

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater 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, 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, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone and IR3535 are effective.
  - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

### **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 (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) are generally recommended. Other U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-approved

repellents contain picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone 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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two 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.

### **COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house.**

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

For more information on what repellent is right for you, consider using the [Environmental Protection Agency's search tool](#) to help you choose skin-applied repellent products.

The Department continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito-borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, chikungunya and dengue. Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's website](#).

If you are experiencing higher than normal mosquito pressure and for more information on mosquito vectors and mosquito control, visit [PascoMosquito.org](#). Follow Pasco County Mosquito Control District on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter [@PascoMosquito](#).

For more information, visit DOH's [Mosquito-Borne and Other Insect-Borne Diseases website](#) or contact your county health department.

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The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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