

Harris County
HCPHES
Public Health & Environmental Services

Herminia Palacio, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director
2223 West Loop South
Houston, Texas 77027
Tele: (713) 439-6000
Fax: (713) 439-6080

Rita Obey
Director
Office of Public Information
2223 West Loop South
Houston, Texas 77027
Tele: (713) 439-6246
Fax: (713) 439-6362

June 22, 2009

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sandy Kachur
713.439.6292

Martha Garza
713.439.6362

Mosquito Season in Full Swing...Fight the Bite!

They're ba-a-ack! As the temperature outside begins to rise, so does the mosquito population. Warmer weather means more mosquitoes, and with more mosquitoes comes an increased risk of West Nile Virus.

Harris County is home to 56 species of mosquitoes. While most are merely pests, the Culex mosquito is the predominate species in Harris County that carries West Nile Virus.

Now is the time to eliminate mosquito breeding habitats from your property, and, take appropriate precautions to avoid being bitten by disease-carrying mosquitoes.

Mosquito-Proof Your Property

- Don't "feed" the storm drains. Sweep up lawn clippings, leaves and tree limbs.
- Remove/empty any containers that can hold water such as flowerpots and toys. Change water in birdbaths at least twice a week.
- Keep rain gutters free of debris.
- Make sure screens are in good condition.

Personal Protection

- If possible, wear long pants and long sleeved shirts when outdoors particularly at dawn and dusk.

- When outdoors, use an insect repellent containing the active ingredient DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 and apply as directed on the label.

Most people who are infected with West Nile virus show no or only mild symptoms such as: low grade fever and headache. More severe signs and symptoms can include: high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, encephalitis, and rarely, death. If you think you have been infected with the West Nile Virus, contact your family physician. And, remember...household pets can be exposed to West Nile Virus. Contact your veterinarian for more information.

Enjoy the outdoors, but remember to protect yourself and your family from mosquito-borne disease.

Your best defense against being bitten is simply to be prepared.

For more information on mosquitoes and disease prevention, log on to www.hcphe.org or www.cdc.gov.