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HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ADVISORY

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Bushnell, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health in Sumter County (DOH-Sumter) and Sumter County Mosquito Control are advising residents of an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Sumter County.

Sumter County Mosquito Control has increased mosquito prevention and surveillance efforts, however, taking personal safety measures can help you and your pets avoid irritating mosquito bites and prevent mosquito-borne infectious diseases.

Avoid being bitten by mosquitoes by taking the following precautions:

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 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 use repellents in accordance with the label instructions. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-methane-diol, 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-

methane-diol, 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 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:

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/#searchform>.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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About the Sumter County Mosquito Control Division

The Mosquito Control Division mission is to achieve and maintain levels of arthropod control as well as protect human health and safety and foster the quality of life of the people, promote the economic development of the County, and facilitate the enjoyment of its natural attractions by reducing the number of pestiferous and disease carrying arthropods.

For more information about the Mosquito Control Division, please visit <https://www.sumtercountyfl.gov/193/Mosquito-Control>.