

Southeast Health District

"Keeping Communities Safe and Healthy"

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Warmer weather, rain bring more mosquitoes

Warmer weather and recent rains have led to an increase of mosquito activity. Local Public Health officials are strongly urging residents to reduce mosquito populations around their home and to protect themselves against mosquito bites and the possible spread of mosquito-borne illnesses, which have already been detected this season.

The first Georgia West Nile Virus (WNV) case for 2010 was confirmed in a Clayton County man in mid-April by the Georgia Department of Community Health/Division of Public Health Acute Disease Epidemiology Section. There have been no cases in Southeast Georgia at this time. However, Public Health officials encourage residents to familiarize themselves with protective measures now.

"The most effective actions we can take to protect against mosquitoes are to reduce their breeding areas and to use mosquito repellent on ourselves," says Dwain Butler, Southeast Health District Environmental Health Director.

He recommends pouring out stagnant water in birdbaths, pet dishes, old tires and any other receptacle in which mosquitoes might breed. This will greatly reduce mosquito populations.

Public Health officials also suggest making sure you and your children use mosquito repellent on exposed skin and clothing when outdoors during times mosquitoes are most active, usually early morning or evening hours. A repellent containing DEET should be used according to package instructions. Repellents with DEET should not be used on infants, and children older than 2 should only use repellents that contain less than 10 percent DEET.

Around 80 percent of those infected with WNV show no symptoms; while up to 20 percent have symptoms such as fever, headache, body aches, nausea, vomiting and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a rash. Those with compromised immune systems are at greater risk of more serious complications and illness.

For more information about these protective measures or mosquito-borne illnesses, contact your local health department.

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