

PUBLIC HEALTH

PREPAREDNESS UPDATE


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Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, Interim Director

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Dallas County prepares as mosquito season looms:

Mosquito season press conference held urging residents to take preventative measures



Left photo: left to right: Asst. Director Environmental Health Rudy Phillips, Entomologist and Mosquito Control Manager Scott Sawlis, Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price, West Nile survivor Attorney Sean Lemoine, Dallas County Health Authority Dr. Christopher Perkins, Dallas County Asst. Administrator Gordan Hikel, DCHHS Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, Right Photo: Microbiologist Dr. Emika Aroh.

As April introduces flowers and rainy weather, mosquito larvae has the potential to develop everywhere, prompting Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) to kick off mosquito season with an annual mosquito control meeting with municipalities and a press conference, urging residents to prepare by doing their part to prevent mosquito-borne illness.

In Dallas County, mosquito season is typically from April to November. DCHHS expects to see reported cases of locally transmitted West Nile virus (WNV) and travel associated chikungunya, dengue, Yellow Fever and Zika virus during this upcoming mosquito season.

During the last two seasons, DCHHS implemented Zika response initiatives due to the rapid spread of Zika virus and import-ed cases.

Locally, all provisional data of reported Zika virus cases decreased from 2016; however, Zika remains a concern when traveling to endemic areas.

This season, the greatest threat remains WNV which claimed the lives of two Dallas County residents during the 2017 mosquito season, a decrease in comparison to the 2012 WNV outbreak which resulted in 20 mortalities.

This season, DCHHS calls for West Nile survivor Sean Lemoine to give his testimony of the impact WNV has had on his life.

"We are extremely fortunate to have a survivor share what I think is one of the most challenging experiences I have heard in terms of life," said Commissioner John Wiley Price. "We take for granted--its just a mosquito bite. We take for granted--its just West Nile. We

have been talking about this for decades now. Ladies and gentlemen...it is deadly serious."

WNV can lead to a wide range of clinical symptoms including neuroinvasive disease.

There are several risk factors for developing neuroinvasive disease which includes individuals over the age of 50 and individuals who are immunocompromised.

"CDC states about 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash," said Dr. Christopher Perkins, Dallas County health authority/medical director.

"Complete recovery from West Nile virus is possible, however fatigue and weakness can last for several weeks or months."

Currently, WNV has no cure, or specific antiviral treatment. To

reduce symptoms such as fever, over the counter pain relievers can be used.

DCHHS' mosquito surveillance and public awareness campaigns have ramped up to help protect residents from mosquito borne illness.

Partnering municipalities have placed traps throughout Dallas County, weekly laboratory test are being conducted and public health educators are scheduled to discuss mosquito prevention at several venues this month.

"Stay up to date on WNV activity in your area and take action to protect yourself and your family," said Ganesh Shivaramaiyer, DCHHS interim director.

"Residents must do their part and begin their prevention practices now."

West Nile virus survivor Sean Lemoine shares his story of survival: *9 years of recovery*



Left to right: Asst. Director Environmental Health Rudy Phillips, Entomologist Mosquito Control Manager Scott Sawlis, Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price, Dallas County Health Authority Dr. Christopher Perkins, DCHHS Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaier, Dallas County Asst. Administrator Gordan Hikel, Attorney Sean Lemoine.

DCHHS invites Sean Lemoine back from his 2010 and 2011 testimony of life after being impacted by West Nile neuroinvasive disease.

Sean's story begins one afternoon in August 2009. While working in his yard with his son, they were surrounded by mosquitoes. Sean re-counts being bitten by mosquitoes and sending his son inside due to the high volume of mosquito activity. Taking a break and returning back to work, Sean sprays on his mosquito repellent and continues to work. But the precaution came too late.

Within days, he began experiencing flu-like symptoms. His vision began to falter and his balance became unstable, so he visited the emergency room. Three weeks later he awoke from having spent the majority of his time in a coma in the intensive care unit.

"When I finally woke up I was on a ventilator, unable to speak and with only limited movement of my hands and feet. I literally had no idea where I was or how I got there," said Sean.

Sean learned he had been bitten by a mosquito which transmitted West Nile virus. While in the coma, he was diagnosed with West Nile neuroinvasive disease and West Nile virus.

Sean recounts the neurological damage that has ravaged his body and inhibits his walking and ability to lift even modest amounts of weighted objects, also leaving him with a paralyzed diaphragm and one functioning vocal cord.

"West Nile has permanently changed my body for the rest of my life. Things that people take for granted, like walking down a street that has an uneven surface are things that I have to plan for to make sure I don't fall and hurt myself further. Jogging, hiking, swimming, and a lot of other outdoor activities that depend on balance and stability are just not things I can do anymore."

Nearly nine years later, the 45-year-old attorney is still recovering.

Sean hopes by sharing his story, he can make a difference in someone's life by being the voice of prevention.

Dallas County recognizes World TB Day



Left to right: Dallas County Health Authority Dr. Christopher Perkins, Field Nurse Supervisor Olive Chui, R.N., TB Medical Director Dr. Garry Woo, Commissioner John Wiley Price, TB Program Coordinator Laura Gomez, R.N., DCHHS Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaier.

Commissioner's Court passed a resolution supporting the collaboration between DCHHS, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in an effort to stop Tuberculosis (TB) by recognizing March 24 as World Tuberculosis Day.

"The disease resides in essentially target populations," said Dr. Garry Woo, tuberculosis medical director. "We're developing tools and reaching out to those individuals in an effort to curb tuberculosis."

In commemoration of World TB Day, DCHHS hosted a two day action event by provid-

ing free TB testing and raising awareness in Dallas County.

Free TB skin testing took place March 23 at the main DCHHS stemmons location. On March 24, the TB division participated in the annual community fair held by TR Hoover Multipurpose Center by providing TB outreach information and offering complimentary hot dogs to the community.

Along with several other vendors, DCHHS joins TR Hoover's mission in increasing community exposure, community education, community accountability and community partnerships.

DCHHS continues mobilization of flu vaccinations

DCHHS continued mobilization of flu vaccinations to various targeted areas in Dallas County in an effort to make the vaccination accessible to vulnerable populations. With more than 20 mobile clinic events conducted, outreach was also extended to more than

three homeless shelters through the end of March. DCHHS' mobile clinic is set to travel to additional clinics during the month of April. For more information, visit www.dallascounty.org/departments/hhs/immunizationhours.html

National Kidney Foundation recognized by Commissioners Court

Dallas County Commissioners Court recognizes the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) for its community involvement, health efforts and long standing relationship with Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS).

Strategic drivers for the organization's awareness campaign include creating broad awareness among the general public, providing basic education and screening to at-risk individuals, in addition to raising awareness in

an effort to become the leading source of kidney health awareness.

Annually, the NKF partners with DCHHS offering free kidney screenings to residents in commemoration of World Kidney Day.

The CDC estimates more than 30 million American adults have kidney disease, the 9th leading cause of death in the U.S., and the numbers are growing in prevalence. NKF aims to reduce this growing number. Learn how you can help at www.kidney.org/



Left to right: Top: Commissioner Dr. Theresa Daniel, Commissioner Mike Cantrell, Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins, Commissioner John Wiley Price and Commissioner Dr. Elba Garcia. Below: left to right: NKF Program Director, Amanda Crowley-Rios, NKF Board Member from Dallas Nephrology Associates Arti Gupta, MD, NKF Patient Services Committee Chair Cora McClendon and NKF Board President from Foote Communications Neil Foote.

Community farm stand partnership with Baylor Scott and White Health and Wellness Center marks the eighth stand throughout Dallas County



Left to right: Dallas County Health Authority Dr. Christopher Perkins, President of Baylor Scott and White Health and Wellness Center and Senior Vice President of Baylor Scott and White Weight Management Services Dr. Donald Wesson, Baylor Scott and White Health and Wellness Center Director of Administration and Business Development Frances Atiasse and DCHHS Interim Director Ganesh Shivaramaier.

To promote workplace wellness, Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) signed an agreement with Baylor Scott and White Health and Wellness Center (BSW HWC) to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to County staff and the community. "Collaborating on this project with (BSW HWC) is an

innovative project that continues DCHHS' mission in promoting a healthy community and environment to Dallas County and its employees," said Ganesh Shivaramaier, DCHHS interim director.

"At low cost, the farm stand offers a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables that are accessible to Dallas County employees and



Left to right: Top: BSW HWC Community Health Worker I Joyce Manalo, Community Health Worker II David Edwards, Operations and Finance Manager Laloni Haggerman and Community Health Worker I Ida Bennett. Right: VFC Clinic Supervisor Sabrina Moats shopping

the community." "The partnership represents an ongoing effort to promote health through nutrition and physical activity, one person, one family, one community at a time," said Donald Wesson, MD, MBA, president of BSW HWC and senior vice president of Baylor Scott and White Weight Management Services (NWMC).

The pop-up farm stands are scheduled to occur twice monthly on Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first floor lobby.

The funding from this initiative benefits Dallas County Health and Human Services marking it the eighth stand locally. For more information on this initiative, visit www.dallascounty.org/hhs/farm-stand.html



MRC holds POD drill

During public health emergencies such as mass casualty incidents, natural disaster, bioterrorism, disease outbreaks or any other event that would rapidly deplete state and local medical resources, Dallas County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) assists with the wide distribution of protected measures such as vaccines and antibiotics to minimize illness; this is either executed in a closed or open point of dispensing (POD).

"Recently, Public Health Preparedness hosted a POD drill with MRC," said Maya Fountain, Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator. "The large-scale clinic exercise

was designed to train volunteers to rapidly dispense medical countermeasures to a large number of people in the event of a public health emergency or disaster."

Dallas County MRC aids in medical response efforts during local public health emergencies by serving both medical or non-medical roles at stations located in a POD site. To learn more information, visit www.dallascounty.org

Top: Senior Planner Richard Esparza with MRC volunteers
Below: MRC volunteers response planning



Dallas County names Shirley Jefferson as new STD/HIV Program Manager

DCHHS welcomes Shirley Jefferson as the new STD/HIV Program Manager.

Mrs. Jefferson has held a supervisory role for more than 10 years demonstrating exemplary leadership.

She is dedicated to ensuring that the division continues to build and maintain positive working relationships with the community, partners and the public.

Mrs. Jefferson is an avid learner who has achieved multiple degrees and certifications, which include a Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Science from Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey.

Looking forward to working with her new team, Mrs. Jefferson shares her favorite quote "Life is not about finding yourself, it's about creating yourself!"



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