



Contact

Christian Grisales, Public Information Officer

PIO_DCHHS@dallascounty.org

972-965-1644 cell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DCHHS reminds residents to take precautions against West Nile Virus

DALLAS (April 20, 2021) – Dallas County Health and Human Services (DCHHS) is reminding residents to take precautions against West Nile Virus (WNV) this 2021 season. WNV is a mosquito-borne disease spread to people by an infected mosquito bite. It was first reported in the US in 1999 and arrived in Dallas County in 2002. Dallas County saw its' most severe WNV years in 2012, 2016, and 2020. In 2020, Dallas County reported a significant increase in WNV disease prevalence, with 20 human cases and 498 positive mosquito tests.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Positive Tests	8	274	222	190	465	705	392	213	38	498
WNV Human Cases	1	398	16	12	23	61	26	13	1	20

"Even though we still need to be concentrating on how to live safely with COVID-19, we cannot forget about West Nile Virus. As the summer heats up and more people are getting outside, remember the four D's: Dress, Drain, Dusk to Dawn, and DEET," said Dr. Philip Huang, Director of DCHHS.

Residents should use the 4D's to reduce exposure to mosquitoes:

- **DEET all day, every day:** Whenever outside, use insect repellents that have the active ingredient DEET or other EPA-registered repellents and always follow label instructions.
- **Dress:** Wear long, loose, and light-colored clothing outside.
- **Drain:** Drain or treat all standing water in and around your home or workplace where mosquitoes could lay eggs.
- **Dusk to Dawn:** Limit outdoor activities from dusk to dawn, when the WNV mosquitoes are most active.

Per the CDC: "Many mosquitoes are most active from dusk to dawn. Be sure to use insect repellent and wear long sleeves and pants at these times or consider staying indoors during these hours."

DCHHS encourages residents in affected areas to be a part of the solution by eliminating insect breeding areas and larvae before they develop into adult, flying mosquitoes. Standing water can be treated with EPA-approved larvicides that are available for retail purchase.

Larvicides are products used to kill immature mosquitoes before they become adults. Larvicides are applied directly to water sources that hold mosquito eggs, larvae or pupae. When used consistently, larvicides can help reduce the overall mosquito burden by limiting the number of mosquitoes that are produced, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

For more information, visit our website <https://www.dallascounty.org/departments/dchhs/westnile.php>

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