

September 20, 2017

**HEALTH OFFICIALS ASKING RESIDENTS TO HELP
PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING AFTER HURRICANE IRMA**
IMPORTANT AFTER THE STORM: TO DRAIN AND COVER



Contact: Arlease Hall Arlease.Hall@FLHealth.gov
772-370-1391

St. Lucie County, FL – The Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie and the St. Lucie County Mosquito Control are continuing to work together to keep you informed and up to date about our cleanup efforts. As we move to the next level following Hurricane Irma it is important, that we remind everyone to “Drain and Cover” to keep all residents safe from mosquitoes.

“In public health we understand, and know that one of the most potential post-hurricane problems, could come in the form of mosquitoes. Residents should vigilantly follow basic safety instructions listed below” said Clint Sperber County Health Officer for the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County.

“We have our crews and fogging trucks out at 100 percent capacity as we are getting calls from all over the Mosquito District,” explained St. Lucie County Mosquito Control Director Glenn Henderson. “We appreciate everyone’s patience as we work as fast as we can to combat this recent breeding boom brought to us by Hurricane Irma.”

For more information on current Mosquito Control efforts please contact the St. Lucie County Mosquito Control Hotline at 772-462-1692. Residents can also download the My St. Lucie app for free from the Apple and Google stores to submit requests for services through their smart phones and tablets.

For more helpful hints on how to “Beat the Bite” visit St. Lucie County’s Mosquito Control page at: www.stlucieco.gov/mosquito.

To protect against mosquitoes, the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County urges the public to "Drain and Cover":

DRAIN standing water:

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater 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 pets’ 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 keep appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin with:

- **CLOTHING** - If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves.
- **REPELLENT** - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with 10-30 percent DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon, eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than two months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens:

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites:

- Clean out troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
- Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

The department has created a public service announcement on the "Drain and Cover" method, which you can view [here](#).

Click [here](#) for our downloadable poster on preventing mosquito bites.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.

###