



For Immediate Release

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**Statement By Richard Weaver, President of the Florida Mosquito Control Association
Re: Mosquito Control Experts Urge Floridians to Remain Proactive, Protect
Themselves as New Mosquito-borne Diseases are Identified**

Tallahassee, FL - "Mosquitoes are stealthy creatures that thrive in every outdoor setting. Our hot, humid, and rainy summer has allowed Florida's more than 80 species of mosquitoes to thrive.

"What is alarming is that many of these mosquitoes bring serious health risks with them, potentially carrying and transmitting diseases like Dengue fever, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, West Nile virus as well as a disease that is new to Florida named Oropouche which is transmitted by biting midges and some mosquitoes.

"So far this summer, Florida has seen increases in mosquito-borne disease activity - including locally transmitted and travel related cases in humans. We have already seen reports of West Nile virus infections in humans, Dengue cases on the rise, and now Oropouche emerging as a new threat.

"We want to assure the public that the [Florida Mosquito Control Association](#) (FMCA) and its members - 67 mosquito control programs including 15 independent districts - are working diligently to control mosquitoes and the diseases they transmit.

"Success is never final in controlling the countless mosquitoes in our state, but Florida remains exceedingly safe and accessible to residents, businesses and visitors. Our state's economic and physical health depend on our incredible team of mosquito control scientists and highly trained professionals.

"We cannot emphasize enough that Floridians and visitor to our state need to take every precaution necessary to protect themselves and their families. It can be as simple as wearing long sleeves and long pants and using EPA registered insect repellants that

contain DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus to protect their loved ones. Mosquitoes are most active at dawn or dusk, so be proactive when you head outdoors.

“Tragically, mosquitoes are responsible for more human deaths than any another animal, [killing nearly a quarter of a million people globally each year](#). Mosquitoes also kill livestock and domestic animals, inflicting damage on agriculture and economies.

“Just last year, South Florida counties saw the largest dengue fever outbreak in more than 75 years. Similarly, malaria was locally transmitted in the state for the first time in more than 20 years.

“Floridians are fortunate to have world-class scientists and professionals working to control mosquitoes and the diseases they spread. These scientists partner with each other and [state and local health departments](#) to share important news, resources, and scientific studies. They also stand ready to respond to any Floridian’s request for local mosquito treatment.”

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Tips

The American Mosquito Control Association has [some tips that are called the three D's of protection](#):

- Drain – Following a rain or storm, each household and property becomes a resort for mosquitoes looking for a place to lay eggs. Mosquitoes only need a teaspoon of water to develop, so emptying even small accumulations of water outside can make a difference.
- Dress – Wear long sleeves and long pants that are light-colored and loose-fitting. These clothing choices are a deterrent to mosquitoes.
- Defend – [Mosquito repellents](#) containing DEET, Picaridin and IR3535 are powerful shields against mosquitoes. If a more natural product is preferred, repellents containing Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus are great options.