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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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****HURRICANE FRANCES FACT SHEET****

HEALTH DEPARTMENT URGES PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO PREVENT WEST NILE VIRUS AND OTHER MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES

PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL – Due to floodwaters and drainage problems from Hurricane Frances, Palm Beach County Health Department officials emphasize the importance of all residents and visitors protecting themselves against mosquito-borne diseases.

Health Department continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include the "5 D's and 1 S" for prevention:

- **Dusk and Dawn** -- Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are seeking blood. For many species, this is during the dusk and dawn hours.
- **Dress** -- Wear clothing that covers all your skin.
- **DEET** -- When the potential exists for exposure to mosquitoes, repellents containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, or N,N-diethyl-3-methylbenzamide) are recommended. Products with concentrations up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. It is not recommended to use DEET on children younger than 2 months old. Infants should be kept indoors or mosquito netting should be used over carriers when mosquitoes are present. If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Always read the manufacturer's directions carefully before you put on a repellent.
- **Drainage** -- Check your home to rid it of standing water, which is where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.
- **Screens** -- Make sure that windows remain closed or are sealed completely by screens at night.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites

Elimination of breeding sites is one of the keys to prevention.

- Clean out eaves, 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.
- Pump out bilges on boats.
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.



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- Page 2 mosquitoes
- 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.

Symptoms of West Nile virus may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. Physicians should contact the county health department if they suspect an individual may have a mosquito-borne illness. DOH laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

Statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses continues. As of September 4, there have been 26 reported human cases of West Nile Virus including 16 in Miami-Dade County and two in Broward County. Palm Beach County has had a number of reported cases in its sentinel chickens but no reported human cases to date. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Health Web site at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/hsee/arbo/index.htm>, call the West Nile Virus Hotline at 1-888-880-5782 or the Health Department at 561-840-4500.

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