



**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

Matthew G. Bevin
Governor

Division of Communications
275 E. Main Street, 5C-A
Frankfort, KY 40621
(502) 564-6786
Fax: (502) 564-7091
www.chfs.ky.gov

Vickie Yates Brown Glisson
Secretary

Statewide News Release

Media Contact: Barbara Fox or Beth Fisher,
(502) 564-6786, ext. 3102 or 3101
Dave Baker, (502) 564-7109, ext. 4454
Gil Lawson, (502) 564-8110, ext. 168

Public Health, Kentucky Fish & Wildlife and State Parks Officials Work Together to Fight the Bite to Prevent Zika Virus in Kentucky

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June. 23, 2016) – The Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) is working with Kentucky Fish & Wildlife and State Parks to inform residents about the risks of exposure to the Zika virus through mosquito bites and how to stay safe in the outdoors throughout the spring and summer season.

“It is important that everyone act to protect yourself and your loved ones this summer from mosquito bites and potential illnesses that mosquitos may carry,” said Dr. Ardis Hoven, Infectious Disease specialist for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. “With the summer season upon us and residents spending more time exploring the great outdoors in Kentucky, we want people to be aware of Zika virus and we want to advise residents to follow these recommendations in order to prevent mosquito bites while outside.”

- Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants. In warmer weather wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that covers exposed skin. Wear socks that cover the ankles and lower legs.
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registered insect repellents such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. When used as directed these are safe and effective, even for pregnant and breast-feeding women. Always follow directions, and reapply as directed. Apply sunscreen prior to insect repellent if using both.
- Do not use insect repellents on babies under two months of age. Instead, dress your baby in clothing that covers the arms and legs, or cover crib, stroller, or carrier with mosquito netting.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin. Do not use permethrin directly on your skin.

“We encourage state park guests and anyone who will be outside this summer to take these precautions to prevent mosquito bites,” said Donnie Holland, commissioner, Kentucky State Parks. “It’s a good idea to keep these steps in mind when you make plans to camp, hike or play outside.”

“We want families to enjoy Kentucky’s great outdoors this summer,” said Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Gregory Johnson. “These simple, common sense precautions will help protect people against illnesses borne by both mosquitoes and ticks.”



DPH recently launched its “Fight the Bite Day and Night” campaign to provide information to the public about the Zika virus and ways to avoid being bitten by the mosquitoes that carry it. Currently, no Kentuckians have become infected with Zika virus infection acquired in Kentucky. Careful prevention is key to preventing a public health emergency in our Commonwealth!

For further information regarding *Aedes* mosquitoes and the diseases that they may transmit, please visit the DPH website <http://healthalerts.ky.gov/zika> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/zika. Be sure to follow KYHealthAlerts on Twitter and DPH’s Zika mascot, Marty Mosquito, on Instagram, @martymosquito.

-30-

The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.