

## Statewide News Release

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### Reduce Standing Water After Spring Rains to Help Avoid Mosquito Bites

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** (May 17, 2010) –The recent rains and flooding in many areas of the state may lead to an increase in numbers of mosquitoes, common insects that breed in and around areas of standing water. Kentuckians should take steps to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds to avoid mosquito bites, which can cause illnesses such as West Nile Virus (WNV).

“We tend to think of mosquitoes as a nuisance in the summer, but they can be a serious health threat and are known to carry disease,” said Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) Commissioner William Hacker, M.D. “Some mosquitoes carry West Nile Virus, which can be extremely debilitating and even deadly in some cases. Young children and the elderly are at higher risk for serious illness.”

DPH urges residents to maintain prevention efforts not only during times of flooding, but also throughout the summer until a hard freeze occurs:

- Survey property for areas of standing water, and eliminate mosquito breeding areas by removing it as it accumulates. Destroy or dispose of tin cans, old tires, buckets, unused plastic swimming pools or other containers that collect and hold water. Do not allow water to accumulate in the containers for more than two days.
- Be aware that mosquitoes are most active at dawn, dusk and early evening, and stay inside if possible.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants outdoors.
- Spray clothing with repellents containing permethrin, DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picardin or oil of lemon eucalyptus, because mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing. (For more information on insect repellants visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/RepellentUpdates.htm>.)
- Apply insect repellent sparingly to exposed skin. Be sure to read and follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.
- Report swimming pools that are neglected and in a state of disrepair.

Dogs and cats also are susceptible to WNV and other illnesses spread by mosquitoes, so pet owners should use a veterinarian-recommended mosquito and tick repellent. Be sure to read and follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) sprays for mosquitoes at the request of local governments and health departments. A KDA county spraying schedule and more information about the program are [available on the Web](#).