



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

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Protect Yourself from Mosquitoes with the 4D's

DUSK/DAWN are the times of day you should stay indoors. This is when mosquitoes are most active.

DRAIN standing water in your backyard and neighborhood-old tires, flowerpots, and clogged gutters. These are mosquito breeding sites.

DRESS in long-sleeves and pants, and light colored clothing. Mosquitoes are more attracted to dark colors.

DEET is the ingredient to look for in your insect repellent. Follow label instructions and always apply repellent to those 6 months and older when outdoors. Reapply after swimming or sweating.



FIGHT THE BITE
FORT BEND

Remember the 4D's for Defense

Public Health News at a Glance

Dallas Mayor Declares West Nile Emergency

Due to the rising number of West Nile Virus cases, Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings declared a state of emergency and requested county and state officials begin aerial pesticide spraying to combat the West Nile Virus. The aerial spraying occurred over the weekend of August 18, 2012. The most current numbers available report 345 people infected and 17 deaths in Dallas County, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. Fort Bend County has seen 12 human cases of West Nile Virus to date with no deaths. More information can be found at www.nbcdfw.com.

WHO Calls For Emergency Stockpile Of Cholera Vaccine

The World Health Organization (WHO) is calling for a global stockpile of cholera vaccine after seeing success in the recent Haiti vaccination project, involving 100,000 people in Port-au-Prince and a rural area of Haiti. More than a half-million Haitians have been infected with cholera since 2010, and more than 7,400 have died from the disease. The neighboring Dominican Republic has reported more than 25,000 cases and over 400 deaths. And this summer, Cuba began to see cholera cases for the first time since 1800s. More information can be found at www.who.int.

SAVE THE DATE

HUNTING FOR HOMES

Saturday, November 3, 2012

10 am-2 pm

Fort Bend County Fair Grounds

**Like us on Facebook for more
information!**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hunting-for-Homes-Animal-Adoption-Event/119375314832879>



Fort Bend County Oral Rabies Vaccine Program

On September 24, 2012, in partnership with the Texas Department of State Health Services and USDA Wildlife Services, Fort Bend County Health & Human Services dropped about 42,000 rabies vaccine sachets from the air with the goal of vaccinating the skunk population in the area. The vaccination program, the Oral Rabies Vaccine Program (ORVP), has the goal of controlling rabies in skunks. Fort Bend County, like many Texas counties, has a history of rabies in skunks, which makes it a practical choice for being a pilot site for this innovative program. During the implementation of the vaccination program for skunks, personnel from the three agencies will distribute vaccine baits in various parts of Fort Bend County. The vaccine in these baits cannot cause rabies because it contains only a single gene from the outer coating of the rabies virus, not the entire rabies virus. The vaccine has been shown to be safe in more than 60 different species of animals, including cats and dogs.



The top sachet is covered in fishmeal.

Rabies is caused by a virus that infects the central nervous system in mammals. It is almost always transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. The majority of rabies cases in the United States occur in wildlife including raccoons, skunks, foxes and bats. Rabies is almost invariably fatal; however, effective vaccines are available to protect people, pets, and livestock.

Throughout the many years of use in the United States and Canada, all vaccine bait contacts have been monitored. When an animal finds vaccine bait and bites into it, the sachet ruptures, coating the animal's throat with vaccine. Animals that receive an adequate dose of the vaccine develop immunity to rabies. As the number of vaccinated animals in the population increases, it acts as a buffer to stop the spread of the disease to other wildlife, domestic animals, and humans.

What if you find unbroken vaccine bait near your home? It is best to leave the bait where you found it unless it is on your lawn, driveway, or other area not likely to attract a skunk. While wearing a glove or other protective covering (e.g. plastic bag), you can move the vaccine bait to an area of thicker cover where a skunk will be more likely to find it.

Why do you need to wear a glove when handling the bait? For two reasons: one, an unbroken bait will not harm you, but the fish smell may get on your skin and is often objectionable to people and; two, it is medication. If you touch the bait, it is less likely to be eaten by a wild animal. If bait is broken and pink liquid (vaccine) is visible, while wearing gloves you may place the bait in a bag and dispose of it with your regular trash because the bait will no longer be effective.

If the pink liquid comes into contact with your skin or after any contact with vaccine bait, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water (as you would after contact with any medication) and call your local health authorities at 1-877-RABORAL (1-877-722-6725) or 281-238-3233.

Disease Spotlight: WEST NILE VIRUS

WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

West Nile virus (WNV) is a potentially serious illness. Experts believe WNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up in the summer and continues into the fall. This fact sheet contains important information that can help you recognize and prevent West Nile virus.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT WNV?

The easiest and best way to avoid WNV is to prevent mosquito bites. Prevent mosquito bites by following the 4D's: Drain, Dress, DEET, and avoiding Dusk & Dawn (more on page 1).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF WNV?

Eighty percent of people show no symptoms of all.

Serious Symptoms in a Few People. About one in 150 people infected with WNV will develop severe illness. The severe symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness, vision loss, numbness and paralysis. These symptoms may last several weeks, and neurological effects may be permanent.

Milder Symptoms in Some People. Up to 20 percent of the people who become infected have symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for as short as a few days, though even healthy people have become sick for several weeks.

HOW DOES WEST NILE VIRUS SPREAD?

Infected Mosquitoes. Most often, WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite.

Transfusions, Transplants, and Mother-to-Child. In a very small number of cases, WNV also has been spread through blood transfusions, organ transplants, breastfeeding and even during pregnancy from mother to baby.

Not through touching. WNV is not spread through casual contact such as touching or kissing a person with the virus.

HOW SOON DO INFECTED PEOPLE GET SICK?

People typically develop symptoms between 3 and 14 days after they are bitten by the infected mosquito.

HOW IS WNV INFECTION TREATED?

There is no specific treatment for WNV infection. In cases with milder symptoms, people experience symptoms such as fever and aches that pass on their own, although even healthy people have become sick for several weeks. In more severe cases, people usually need to go to the hospital where they can receive supportive treatment including intravenous fluids, help with breathing and nursing care.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE WNV?

Milder WNV illness improves on its own, and people do not necessarily need to seek medical attention for this infection though they may choose to do so. If you develop symptoms of severe WNV illness, such as unusually severe headaches or confusion, seek medical attention immediately. Severe WNV illness usually requires hospitalization. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are encouraged to talk to their doctor if they develop symptoms that could be WNV.

WHAT IS THE RISK OF GETTING SICK FROM WNV?

People over 50 at higher risk to get severe illness. People over the age of 50 are more likely to develop serious symptoms of WNV if they do get sick and should take special care to avoid mosquito bites.

Being outside means you're at risk. The more time you're outdoors, the more time you could be bitten by an infected mosquito. Pay attention to avoiding mosquito bites if you spend a lot of time outside, either working or playing.

Risk through medical procedures is very low. All donated blood is checked for WNV before being used. The risk of getting WNV through blood transfusions and organ transplants is very small, and should not prevent people who need surgery from having it. If you have concerns, talk to your doctor.

PREGNANCY AND NURSING DO NOT INCREASE RISK OF BECOMING INFECTED WITH WNV.

The risk that WNV may present to a fetus or an infant infected through breastmilk is still being evaluated. Talk with your health care provider if you have concerns.

For more information visit

bit.ly/fightbite or call 281-238-3551



Although hurricane season is coming to an end, it's not too late to get prepared! One way to prepare is by registering with Enable Fort Bend. Enable Fort Bend is a system that allows emergency management personnel to be aware of those with medical and functional needs in Fort Bend County.

Who should register?

Anyone who needs medical assistance including:

- Persons with a disability
- Persons with hearing and vision impairment
- Persons requiring medical equipment
- Persons who anticipate needing assistance in an emergency

Why should I register?

During a disaster or an emergency, people with special needs may require assistance if they experience power outages, need medications or need medical support.

This survey will help identify people who may need assistance during an emergency and assist in planning for such an event.

How do I register?

Go to

www.enablefortbend.com

OR

Call [281-238-3514](tel:281-238-3514) to have a survey sent to you.

Don't forget to be prepared! Make a Kit, Have a Plan, Stay Informed!



Public Health
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Health & Human Services is Fort Bend County's principal agency responsible for protecting the health of county residents and providing essential human services, especially for those least able to help themselves.

The Public Health Team works to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of Fort Bend County through disease prevention and intervention, and through the promotion of a healthy community environment.