

TARRANT COUNTY

NEWS & INFORMATION



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Beware Mosquito-borne Illnesses

As the weather warms up in Tarrant County, we are reminded of the joys of upcoming spring and summer seasons. However, at the same time, we should remember, that warm weather also brings its challenges. One such challenge is the resurgence of the mosquito population. The return of rain showers and warmer temperatures is a reminder of the resurgence of mosquitoes across Tarrant County.

Most residents are familiar with the dreaded West Nile Virus. However, people should also be aware there are other diseases on the horizon spread by mosquitos such as Dengue and Chikungunya.

Halting the growth of mosquitoes and eliminating their breeding grounds goes a long way in preventing West Nile, Dengue and Chikungunya.

As in previous seasons, Tarrant County Public Health (TCPH) has provided traps to all its cities for West Nile Virus surveillance. The municipalities set out the traps in strategic locations, collect the samples and deliver them to the TCPH laboratory or contracted laboratory for testing. Collectively, more than 150 traps will be used across the county. TCPH will set the traps and collect samples in the county's unincorporated areas.

"There's no way to predict what our mosquito season will be like, or if we will see new diseases like Chikungunya and Dengue emerge and take a foothold in Texas," said TCPH Health Director Vinny Taneja. "However, we can do certain things to prevent and control the growth of mosquitoes. Properly disposing of old tires that collect stagnant water is a big help."

Residents can take other steps to prevent mosquitoes from breeding on their property:

- eliminate standing water and puddles,
- empty bird baths and fountains frequently and replace with fresh water and
- fill ditches and low-lying spots on your property with dirt and other solid debris.

If you plan to be outdoors when mosquitoes are most active, wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts to minimize exposed skin. Deet-based repellents are effective as well.

Locations of traps, test results and more information can be found on the Mosquito-borne Illness section of the TCPH website.

Tornado Safety For Tarrant County

Tornadoes can occur at any time of year in Texas, but they happen most often in spring and summer. Storms are most likely to strike in the late afternoon and early evening hours. Tarrant County residents should monitor local TV and radio stations for storm information, as well as broadcasts on weather radios.

A tornado watch is issued when severe weather is expected along with large or multiple tornadoes. It means WATCH the sky. A tornado warning means TAKE ACTION because a tornado is on the ground. Seek shelter immediately. A tornado warning usually covers one county or a portion of a county and generally lasts for an hour or less.

When a tornado is sighted, the most important rule is to get low and stay low.

- Seek shelter in an interior room on the lowest floor of the home, such as a bathroom, closet or room without windows.
- In office buildings, go to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor.
- Leave your mobile home and take shelter in a nearby building. If no building is nearby, lie flat in a ditch or ravine.
- Never stay inside a car. Leave the car and lie flat in a ditch or a ravine. If a building is nearby, take shelter inside. Never try to outrun a tornado in your car.
- At school, follow plans and go to a designated shelter area, usually interior hallways on the lowest floor. Avoid auditoriums, gyms and areas with wide, free span roofs.
- Go to the interior rooms and halls on the lowest floor of a shopping center. Do not leave the shopping center to get in your car.
- If you are in open country, take cover on low, protected ground.
- Avoid areas near exterior glass or doors, areas along exterior walls, or rooms with wide expanse roofs – such as auditoriums, cafeterias and gyms.



Help Stop Illegal Dumping!

Have you witnessed dumping in your area? Trash, rubbish and garbage in unauthorized areas has been known to attract rats, snakes, mosquitoes and other disease carrying pests, which may threaten public health and safety. Not to mention the unsightly and negative image it projects on your community.

In Tarrant County, dumping and littering is illegal! Cities within Tarrant County, Tarrant County government and area law enforcement have been working hard to prevent dumping and restore affected areas to their original beauty.

But YOUR help is needed. When you observe illegal dumping, call your local law enforcement and elected officials. Or call the North Central Texas Stop Illegal Dumping Hotline at 1-800-335-DUMP. Leave a message explaining the details and location where you witnessed the activity and the information will be forwarded to the proper jurisdiction.

Always remember, reporting illegal dumping is confidential and will help the community and environment.

Nominations Sought For Historical Commission Awards

The Tarrant County Historical Commission is accepting nominations for awards to be presented at the Preservation Summit this fall. The Wm. E. Jary Award is for work in preserving the heritage of Tarrant County. The Tom Vandergriff Award was devoted to Tarrant County and its history. The Debbie Reynolds-Hazen Award is given for historians under the age of 50. The Summit Award is for architectural preservation and restoration.

Nomination forms can be obtained by writing the Tarrant County Historical Commission, 200 Taylor Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102. The completed forms must be returned by August 1, 2015.

