

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE

53-16

8/17/16

PROTECTING FSIS INSPECTION PROGRAM PERSONNEL FROM MOSQUITO BITES

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides instructions to inspection program personnel (IPP) who conduct regulatory verification activities outdoors so that they can protect themselves against potential mosquito borne diseases.

II. BACKGROUND

There are many mosquito-transmitted infectious agents including Zika, West Nile and Saint Louis encephalitis viruses (SLEV). The Zika virus can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito and therefore occurs in limited areas of the country. Zika virus infection has been reported in parts of the United States (U.S.). During certain periods of the year, West Nile Virus is transmitted by mosquitos throughout the U.S.

III. PROCEDURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO MOSQUITO BORNE ILLNESSES

A. The best way to protect against infection is to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. The CDC has resources that can be valuable for FSIS employees.

1. For additional information on the Zika Virus visit <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html>
2. For additional information on the West Nile Virus visit <http://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html>
3. For additional information on the SLEV visit <http://www.cdc.gov/sle/>
4. For more information on preventing mosquito bites visit <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>
5. For more information on selecting Environmental Protection Agency(EPA) registered repellent visit <https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/find-insect-repellent-right-you>

B. Some preventive procedures that apply to IPP who have official duties in areas of establishments where they can be exposed to mosquitos (e.g., ante mortem inspection, performance of food defense tasks, verification of 9 CFR 416.1 requirements):

1. Use EPA-registered insect repellents with one of the following active ingredients (Picaridin, N,N-Diethyl-meta-toluamide (DEET), Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus or IR3535 (see link above for details). When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women;

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2. Always follow the product label instructions;
3. Reapply insect repellent as directed;
4. Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing;
5. If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent; and
6. Wear light-colored clothing, long-sleeved shirts and long pants.

C. IPP are to follow the good sanitary practices and personal hygiene to protect themselves and thoroughly wash the insect repellent off their hands when re-entering the inspected establishment to prevent cross contamination.

IV. REIMBURSEMENT FOR INSECT REPELLENT

A. IPP who have official duties in areas of establishments where they can be exposed to mosquitos will be reimbursed for insect repellent in quantities appropriate for personal use.

B. IPP can find the reimbursement procedures [FSIS Directive 3410.3](#), *Reimbursement Provisions for Inspection Expenditures*. IPP will only be reimbursed for a quantity of repellent that is appropriate for personal use.

V. SYMPTOMS OF DISEASES FOR MOSQUITO BITES

A. Zika Virus - Most people do not develop symptoms when infected with the Zika virus. If symptoms do occur they can include fever, rash, joint pain and conjunctivitis (red eye), muscle pain and headache.

B. West Nile Virus – According to the CDC, 70 – 80% of people who become infected with West Nile virus don't develop symptoms. If symptoms do occur they are headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea or rash.

C. SLEV – According to the CDC, less than 1% of SLEV infections are clinically apparent and the vast majority of infections remain undiagnosed. The incubation period for SLEV disease (the time from infected mosquito bite to onset of illness) ranges from 5 to 15 days. Onset of illness is usually abrupt, with fever, headache, dizziness, nausea, and malaise. Signs and symptoms intensify over a period of several days to a week.

D. IPP are encouraged to consult with their personal health care provider if they observe symptoms consistent with Zika, West Nile or SLEV infection and work in or travel to areas where either virus is found.

VI. QUESTIONS

Refer questions to the Occupational Health and Safety Specialist for your district.



Assistant Administrator
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