

Safety precautions best deterrent against dengue fever

Bill Roome

Navy Region Hawaii Environmental

The Hawaii State Department of Health continues to warn residents to be aware of dengue fever. Dengue fever is caused by a virus and is characterized by a high fever, severe headache and eye pain, chills, body and joint pains, nausea, vomiting and a rash. The illness lasts about a week with a two-week recovery period and is spread by the bite of an infected day-biting mosquito (*aedes albopictus*). However, there is no direct person-to-person spread.

As of Oct. 22, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed a total of 62 cases of dengue fever in the state, including 52 cases on Maui, six on Oahu and four on Kauai. Since there is no vaccine or specific treatment for dengue fever, residents are strongly advised to take precautions to avoid being bitten by mosqui-

toes and to control mosquitoes in their environment. Helpful activities include the following:

- Locate all sources of standing water on your properties and empty or remove them. Examples of such areas include roof gutters, plastic containers, 55-gallon drums, buckets, used automobile tires, flowerpots, cans, etc.
- Empty and clean pet watering containers at least once a week
- Remove discarded bulky items that may collect standing water, including abandoned cars, boats, sheds, etc.
- Empty and scour vases with fresh flowers at least once a week.
- Check all screen doors and windows. Repair if there are holes or tears in the screens.
- Plants that collect water should be sprayed weekly with a garden insecticide.
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants to limit exposure to mosquitoes. Light-colored clothing is also recommended.

•Use indoor insecticides and repellents if mosquitoes are in the home.

•Apply repellants on exposed skin and clothing when mosquito exposure is unavoidable.

•If appropriate, use air conditioners when indoors.

If you become ill you should consult your health care provider. In addition, if you develop a fever, you should protect yourself from being bitten by mosquitoes until you have completely recovered.

Persistent, unrelenting mosquito control efforts are the only way to stop the spread of dengue fever. All Hawaii residents are urged to keep their properties free of sites where mosquitoes can breed.

For additional information on dengue fever, you may call the Hawaii Department of Health dengue helpline at (808) 586-8352 or log on the department's website at www.hawaii.gov/doh/dengue.

Housing residents should call service desk for help with mosquito control

Navy family housing residents should call the DZB service desk directly at 486-4200 if they note any problems which could provide breeding areas for mosquitoes. Such situations include standing and pooling of water, water line breaks, etc. The DZB contractors will take corrective action.

Residents should also ensure that other guidelines, as outlined in the accompanying dengue fever article, are followed.

Servicemembers make the difference for Hawaii's environment

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Would you like to teach people how to protect and nurture the fragile coral reefs in Hanauma Bay or possibly assist in removing invasive plants along Kaena Point while spinner dolphins frolic within eye site? Or maybe you'd like to create additional nesting areas and food sources for endangered birds? If these types of projects appeal to you, then organizations such as the Hanauma Bay Education Center, the Sierra Club and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service could use your help.

Some of these organizations, such as the Sierra Club, require individuals to make a reservation to limit the number of people working a specific project.

The Hanauma Bay Education Center requires people to attend classes to become proficient in a specific environmental topic while the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is looking for people with a "can do" attitude. The following is a list of organizations, their upcoming projects, dates and points of contact:

Hanauma Bay Center

Students are required to attend six classes and commit to working at Hanauma Bay at least four hours per week.

The point of contact is Jeff Kuwabara, 397-5840, or e-mail Jeff at kuwabara@hawaii.edu

Oct. 27 - 9 a.m.-noon, training class, Hanauma Bay

Oct. 30 - 6-9 p.m., training class, Kapiolani Park

Nov. 1 - 6-9 p.m., training class, Kapiolani Park

Nov. 3 - 9 a.m.-noon, training class, Hanauma Bay.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Nov. 10 - Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuge - Honolulu Unit. Remove vegetation from shoreline and repair fences. Work will be done from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Bring water, sturdy shoes, hats and a snack. Point of contact is Nancy Hoffman, 637-6330, extension 27.

Nov. 24 - Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuge - Honolulu Unit. See above listing for details.

Dec. 15 - Pearl Harbor National Wildlife Refuge- Waiawa Unit. Remove vegetation along fence lines and repair fences to prevent access by feral dogs. Point of contact is Nancy Hoffman, 637-6330, extension 27.

Sierra Club

Oct. 27 - Kaiwi Coast. Remove debris along

Oahu's east coastline from 9 a.m. to noon. Bring water, snack, sunglasses, work gloves and closed shoes. No pets are allowed. Leaders are: Mike Gawley, 779-3645; Sue Garner, 988-0481; Arlene Buchholz, 988-9806; and Betsy Weatherford, 526-3986.

Nov. 3 - Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve. Reservations are required. Volunteers are needed to remove invasive plants that endan-

ger this rare and beautiful native coastal ecosystem. Sunscreen, hats, rain gear and sturdy shoes are recommended. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Camp Erdman. Finish at noon. Leader is Sherine Boomla, 739-3936.

Nov. 17 - Kawaewae Heiau. This one-half-day project involves removing vegetation to help in the restoration of this sacred site. Enjoy great views of Kaneohe Bay and the Koolau Range.

Bring water, a snack, rain gear, insect repellent, gloves and tools (sickles, pruners, hand saws). Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the First Hawaiian Bank parking lot in Windward City Shopping Center in Kaneohe. Leader is Gwen Sinclair, 734-3214.

Nov. 18 - Pahole Natural Area Reserve. Reservations are required. Want to learn about rare native plants in a gorgeous location

and get a feeling of accomplishment? Volunteers are needed to build trails, help control invasive plants, plant native plants. Leader is Annette Kaohelaulii, 235-5431.

Dec. 8 - Miconia Removal Project-Manoa, Maunawili. Help remove invasive plants in Manoa or Maunawili. Work area is off trail and brushy. Long pants, shirt and clear lens eye protection are needed. Bring insect

repellent and rain gear. Bring a machete if you are handy with one. Leaders are Kapua Kawelo or Joby Rohrer, 656-7641.

Dec. 16 - Kaena Point Natural Area Reserve. See Nov. 3 listing for details. Leader is Sue Garner, 988-0481.

If you have trouble reaching the points of contact for the above projects, call Bill Roome, Region Public Affairs Office at 473-2926.