

# RC/PIO News & Notes 7-5-2024



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## News and Notes

A fourth human case this year of Avian Influenza stemming from cattle was reported by CDC this week in Colorado. Hot weather and tropical storm activity are among the focal points in recent days. Dengue fever and other threats perpetrated by mosquitoes is another recent concern. This was reflected in a state DPH news release that went out one week ago today:

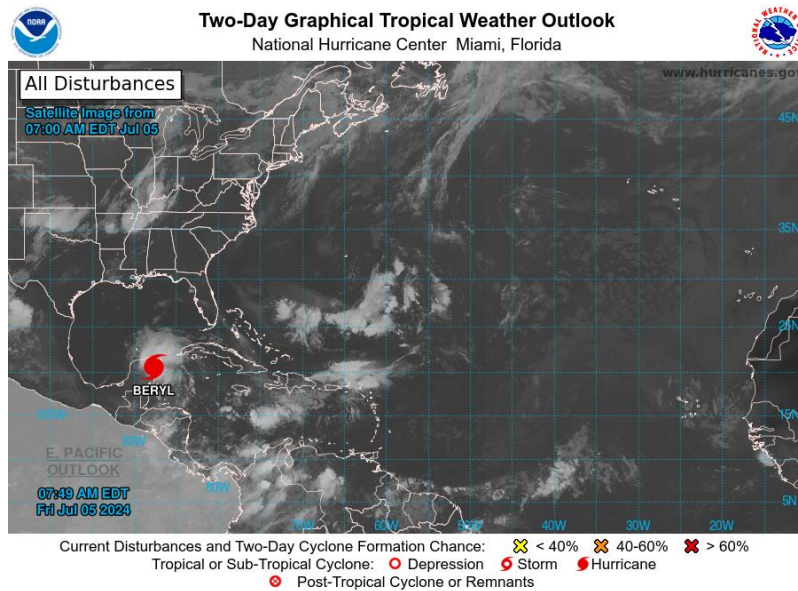
*Diseases that are spread to people by mosquitoes include eastern equine encephalitis, West Nile virus, Zika virus, chikungunya virus, malaria, and dengue. To date this year, in Georgia, there is one confirmed case of chikungunya, 20 confirmed cases of malaria, and 14 confirmed cases of dengue – all related to travel outside the United States.*

*This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned about an increased risk for dengue fever infections in the United States because of the record-breaking number of cases worldwide. Dengue is the most common mosquito-borne infection, but most dengue cases in the U.S. are associated with travel to areas such as the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the Americas, and other [areas with frequent or continuous dengue transmission](#).*

*The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recommends using [EPA-registered insect repellents](#) containing **DEET** (20%- 30%), Picaridin, IR3535, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.*

*If you're using sunscreen, apply it first, followed by insect repellent. Wear light-colored clothing, including loose-fitting long sleeves, pants, and socks, to help protect against mosquito bites.*

## Hurricane Beryl



Hot weather and very warm ocean temperatures this year are adding fuel to the predicted strong hurricane season. The high tropical storm activity of early July is more typical for early September. Monitoring and preparing for potential response actions continue.

## NPHIC Highlights

A couple highlights from the National Public Health Information Coalition this week provide some good information to help those combatting Mis, Dis, and Mal – Information. This first relates to public perceptions on the COVID response. The second provides study data on sunscreen:

### U.S. Poll Shows Fair Amount of Common Ground on Preventive COVID-19 Steps



A recent poll by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the de Beaumont Foundation reveals surprising unity among Americans regarding COVID-19 preventive measures, countering media portrayals of deep divisions. Key findings indicate widespread support for strategies like mask mandates in businesses (70%), healthcare worker vaccinations (65%), indoor dining closures (63%), and K-12 public school closures (56%).

Despite political and racial disparities, a majority deemed these measures beneficial. Notably, only 20% rejected all strategies. Criticisms centered on policy duration and individual rights. The survey suggests a need for clearer communication on policy timelines and emphasizes public health officials' role in bridging perceived divides. Read more in CIDRAP [here](#).

### Health Experts Debunk Four Anti-Sunscreen Myths Spreading on TikTok

Social media influencers are propagating a dangerous trend urging followers to forego sunscreen, despite established evidence linking sun exposure to skin cancer. Debunking myths, experts clarify that both mineral-based and chemical sunscreens are safe and not toxic. With summer's arrival, sun-related risks heighten, yet misleading online content receives millions of views, fueling skepticism about sunscreen's safety. Experts emphasize the well-established connection between UV radiation and skin cancer, underscoring the importance of sun protection to prevent DNA damage and mutations leading to cancer. Clarifying misconceptions, they stress the significant role of sunscreen in reducing skin cancer risk amidst rising online misinformation. Read more in Healthline [here](#).



## Next Week Preview

Next week we have a Return to Work meeting on Tuesday afternoon. The state DPH EPR Grant Kick-off meeting will be held Wednesday. There are multiple meetings Thursday and Friday including a national Access and Functional Needs virtual symposium:

[2024 National Access and Functional Needs Symposium Tickets, Thu, Jul 11, 2024 at 12:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Next week we may have more information on the up-coming DPH Media/Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training to be held in Rome, after an organizational meeting today.

### About “News & Notes”

“News & Notes” is a weekly communication aimed at risk communicators and public information officers within Georgia’s 18 public health districts. The goal of the communication is to increase preparedness through the exchange of information about significant events, training, and other planned activities. Some information herein may be considered FYUO or For Your Use Only. Please be judicious when forwarding. For questions, comments or to submit information for inclusion, contact Eric Jens at [Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov](mailto:Eric.Jens@dph.ga.gov)