



RC/PIO News & Notes |

April 2, 2026

A Weekly Update from **Eric Jens, Risk Communicator** – Georgia Department of Public Health
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News & Notes

Much of the highlights this week are previews to next week happenings, which include multiple meetings in Macon, National Public Health Week, and more. Friday is a state holiday, hence News and Notes is being delivered today.

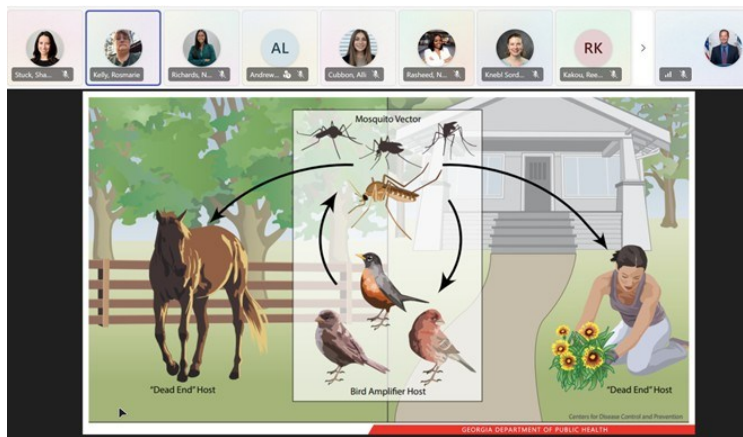
R/C meeting and CERC training

Thanks to everyone who helped organize, agreed to present, signed up to take part, or made other contributions planning next week's annual statewide DPH risk communicators meeting (Thursday, April 9) and the Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training (Friday, April 10) in Macon. The annual meeting includes 16 who indicated they will be there in person, and another 14 participants joining via Teams. The CERC training has 40 registered to attend. If anyone would like to attend the training and has not signed up at this point, they should reach out directly. If anyone has any questions or concerns, again, please reach out. We look forward to seeing everyone in Macon.



National Public Health Week

Next week is National Public Health Week, an annual occasion to recognize all the ways in which everyone has benefitted from the work of those in Public Health. The Public Health & Equity Resource Navigator ([PHERN](#)) provides more details on that work and the purpose of this recognition. This year's theme is: 'Ready. Set. Action!'



Arboviral Diseases

The latest edition of the 2026 Vector-borne Disease series featured and arboviral disease investigation overview. Shawna Stuck talked about

how cases are determined and classified so consistent and accurate data can be used to compare state to state, and year to year. She said West Nile Virus often results in asymptomatic cases, but the potential range of symptoms can be dramatic (*see data below*). Rosmarie Kelly talked about the types of mosquitoes and the threats they pose. She said the Southern House Mosquito (*non-scientific nomenclature*) is very hardy during drought, and thrives when people water their lawns and gardens.

West Nile Virus – Clinical Presentation

Incubation Period: 2-6 days (range 1-14 days)

Mild Illness (~20%)

- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches
- Joint pains
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Rash

Neuroinvasive Illness (<1%)

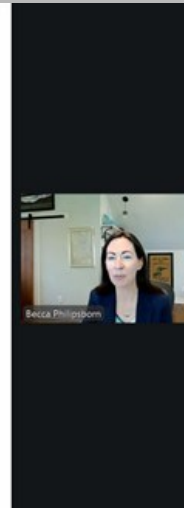
- High fever
- Neck stiffness
- Muscle weakness
- Altered mental status
- Tremors
- Encephalitis
- Meningitis
- Coma
- Paralysis

80% of people infected with WNV will show no symptoms.



Climate and Health Actionable Research and Translation Webinar Series

Heat and Emergency Department Visits: Findings from CHART's Research Project Core



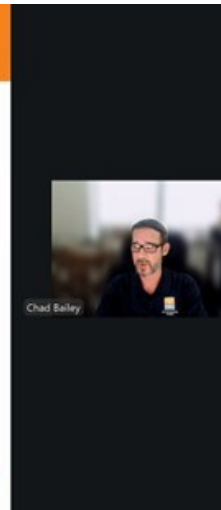
Weather Webinars

Webinars focused on severe weather events were held Tuesday. The first featured extreme heat and the correlation between increased visits to emergency Departments. Presenters from Emory said such situations are often attributed to a combination of age, medication, underlying conditions, job environments and the lack of education on heat threats and mitigation strategies. The second webinar hosted by ASTHO featured an overview of Florida severe weather event responses in recent years, specifically those featuring Environmental Health Strike Teams.

Recent Hurricane Responses Summary

Summary of Environmental Public Health Hurricane Missions

Year	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024
Storm	Hurricane Ian	Hurricane Idalia	Hurricane Debby	Hurricane Helene	Hurricane Milton
# of responders deployed	43	19	4	17	10
# of missions	11	5	1	5	2



Next Week Preview

In addition to the events previewed above for next week, there is also a BioWatch quarterly meeting on Monday, a FIFA planning meeting on Tuesday among other events on the calendar.

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.

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