For Immediate Release

Friday, October 16, 2026

Contact: Alia Faraj-Johnson, 850-212-8317

Statement from Peter Jiang, Ph.D., President of the Florida Mosquito Control Association and Director of Hillsborough County Mosquito Management

Re: The accidental death of a helicopter pilot on a mosquito control mission in Manatee County on Thursday, October 15, 2026

Tallahassee, FL --"Words cannot express our sadness after the tragic accident took the life of a helicopter pilot on a mosquito control mission last night in Manatee County.

"Like hundreds of dedicated mosquito control professionals working statewide to protect the health of residents and visitors, his commitment to serving the public was complete and selfless.

"His dedication helped protect the health and well-being of Manatee County residents and visitors, providing peace of mind that highly trained professionals like him were working tirelessly, often under challenging and dangerous conditions, to protect their communities from mosquito-borne diseases. This loss is a heartbreaking reminder of the risks associated with carrying out this important mission.

"Mosquito control professionals perform vital and challenging work, sometimes under difficult and hazardous conditions. The safety of mosquito control team members and the communities we serve is always a top priority. Pilots undergo rigorous training to carry out their challenging jobs that protect public health and the way of life in Florida.

"In Florida, the mosquito control community is a close knit family, and we deeply mourn the loss of the pilot who was carrying out his mission of serving his community. On behalf of our members in all 67 counties, we extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends and his colleagues in Manatee County."

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