Mosquitos, Tick and Vector Born – Landscaping Fatality File

Fatal Mosquito-Borne Disease Incident in Landscaping – July 2023 Incident Report

On July 23, 2023, a fatal incident involving mosquito-borne disease occurred during a residential landscaping project in Miami, Florida, resulting in the death of a 29-year-old landscaper, Laura Hernandez. Hernandez was performing routine landscaping tasks, including trimming bushes and removing standing water from planters, when she was bitten multiple times by infected mosquitoes.

A few days after the bites, Hernandez developed severe symptoms, including high fever, headaches, and confusion. She was diagnosed with West Nile Virus (WNV) and admitted to the hospital, where her condition rapidly deteriorated, leading to encephalitis. Despite intensive medical care, Hernandez succumbed to the disease on August 1, 2023.

The investigation revealed that there were no preventive measures in place to protect workers from mosquito bites, such as using insect repellents or wearing protective clothing. Additionally, the presence of standing water on the site, which serves as breeding grounds for mosquitoes, exacerbated the risk of exposure.