

# MOSQUITOES

## Can Be A Nuisance

**M**osquitoes can be an annoying summertime pest. The inflammation and itching from mosquito bites can be a nuisance. To prevent and control this annoyance around your home, it is important to understand the life cycle of mosquitoes, how they reproduce, where they lay their eggs, and how the eggs hatch into larvae.

### Water is Vital To Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes need water to hatch and develop into larvae. Only the fourth stage, the adult mosquito, with which we are well familiar, is nonaquatic. Therefore, if stagnant water sources can be eliminated, mosquito breeding will be prevented and adult populations will be reduced.

### The Search For Water

The adult female mosquito lays eggs on standing or stagnant water found near streams or ponds, and street catch basins. Rainwater in discarded tin cans, old paint buckets, tires, birdbaths, ornamental pools and clogged roof gutters also serve as ideal places for egg laying. Construction work during the summer months creates many breeding places such as foundation excavations, ditches, wheel tracks, and low spots caused by faulty grading. Swimming pools without recirculation and treatment systems that remain filled with water for several days are ideal places for mosquitoes to lay eggs. Swimming pool covers also can accumulate water and attract egg laying mosquitoes.

### Control

If mosquitoes are annoying where you live, the first thing to do is to find and eliminate the water essential for their reproduction.

With increasing concern about the unintentional

damage which may be caused by the use of chemicals in the environment, the use of pesticides must be approached with caution. Mosquito populations increase in seasons with hot and wet weather. There are actions which homeowners can take during these times to significantly reduce mosquito populations around their homes.

### Eleven Steps For Control Of Mosquitoes

1. Eliminate all standing or stagnant water by draining and filling depressions with soil.
2. Dispose of empty paint buckets, tin cans, old tires and other discarded containers.
3. Clean clogged roof gutters and drain flat roofs.
4. Change water in birdbaths and fountains weekly.
5. Stock ornamental pools with goldfish, that will eat mosquito larvae. (Do not put goldfish in natural ponds.)
6. Drain pool covers and empty small plastic swimming pools when they are not in regular use.
7. Drain water from children's tire swings.
8. Prevent saucers under plants from accumulating water. If larvae are seen, dump the water and refill.
9. Tree holes and some puddles may not be easily drained. In this case, coat the surface with a small amount of vegetable cooking oil to smother larvae.
10. Watch for any possible breeding spot and deal with it immediately.
11. Keep grass mowed and remove unnecessary brush to prevent harborage of mosquitoes.

### Protect Yourself from Mosquito Bites Around Your Home

You can protect yourself from mosquito bites by screening windows and doors, and relocating outdoor lighting.

A fine screen (14 to 18 wires to the inch) works best for excluding mosquitoes. Window and door screens should fit tightly and doors should swing out and be self-closing.

Outdoor lighting over doorways attracts mosquitoes which will enter your homes when the doors are opened. Relocate lights or use yellow light bulbs that will not attract insects.

### Outside Your Home

Wear protective clothing and apply an insect repellent, if desired, with strict adherence to the directions on the label. (See below).

Denim and other closely woven heavy fabrics will give better protection than light or loosely woven garments.

### Insect Repellent

If you choose to use repellents, observe label directions. Repellents containing DEET (diethyl-metatoluamide) are particularly effective, but should be applied **only to clothing** and only as directed. Caution should be used, especially with children, since DEET is readily absorbed through the skin. As an alternative to chemical repellents, some herbal materials and cosmetic products have been found to be effective.

### Final Note

Much has been learned since chemical sprays were first applied to large areas to control mosquitoes. Adult mosquitoes may emerge continually over a period of time and any benefit from spraying is short-lived. Mosquitoes have been part of the environment for all of human history. Understanding and the common sense precautions noted in this pamphlet will hopefully assist you in recognizing mosquitoes as a seasonal nuisance.