

Health Information on Mosquito Control

Breeding Habitat Source Reduction

Summary

One of the most effective ways to control mosquito populations that transmit disease is to reduce the number and types of mosquito breeding habitats in your community. All mosquitoes require a water source to lay their eggs, which in the hottest part of summer can hatch into larvae within a week. To effectively reduce larval hatching, check your property and your neighborhood for the following potential mosquito breeding sites:



Common Residential Hazards

Fountains, Birdbaths and Water Gardens

- ✓ These outdoor reservoirs can provide ideal habitat for breeding mosquitoes. Replace water in birdbaths and fountains at least twice a week. Mosquito larvicides are available at many garden centers for consumer use and can be used in water gardens and fountains without harming other living things. Certain species of goldfish and freshwater minnows that eat mosquito larvae can be used in fountains and water gardens.

In Wisconsin, you need a permit from the Department of Natural Resources in order to use larvicides in ponds and lakes. Contact your nearest DNR service center and ask to speak with the regional aquatic habitat specialist for more information.

Tires

- ✓ Tires are especially notorious mosquito breeding sites. They should be properly discarded, covered or stacked in a shed or garage so that they cannot fill with water. If you have a tire swing, make a hole in the bottom of it to allow water to drain out.

Flower Pots, Garbage Cans, and Recycling Bins

- ✓ These are found in every yard, and can hold enough water to breed mosquitoes. Drain dishes under flowerpots every few days and after rainstorms or move them inside.
- ✓ Cover outdoor trash and recycling cans with tight-fitting lids.

Faucets and Air Conditioners

- ✓ Remember that they can leak and form puddles that may provide mosquito breeding habitat. Eliminate any standing water in puddles.

Rain Gutters and Spouts

- ✓ Gutters and downspouts need to be kept clean and maintained. Leaves and other debris can create pools of water and an ideal environment for mosquito larvae.

Animal Watering Troughs

- ✓ These should be flushed at least twice a week to prevent them from becoming a breeding site.

Leaves and Debris

- ✓ Clean up leaves and yard debris from low-lying areas to reduce stagnant water pools.

Plastic and Canvas Tarps

- ✓ These are commonly used to cover log piles, boats, and pools, and they can hold enough water to breed mosquitoes. Make sure water does not collect in tarps used outdoors.

Wheelbarrows, Tubs, Wading Pools and Boats

- ✓ These should be stored upside down or under cover when not in use.

If you have further questions about how to control habitat where mosquitoes can breed or wish to report a site you think may constitute a breeding site for mosquitoes, contact your local public health agency.



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