



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

## Article: Preventing Mosquitoes Around the Home – Long

### Do Your Part from the Start!—Prevent and Protect Against Mosquitoes

Mosquito season is here and those pesky bloodsuckers are not just a nuisance, they can also transmit viruses such as West Nile, Chikungunya and Zika. Now is the perfect time to eliminate potential breeding sites in and around your yard where mosquitoes like to lay their eggs.

Prevent mosquitoes around your home and neighborhood and protect yourself from their bites by taking the following steps this spring, summer and fall:

#### Control mosquitoes in your yard:

- **Eliminate standing water.** Tip and toss standing water from containers like tires, buckets, flower pots, corrugated drain pipes, tarps, bird baths, toys, etc. Discard containers or place indoors.
- **Treat standing water with a larvicide\* if it cannot be eliminated.** Mosquito-specific, environmentally-friendly larvicides are available. If you can't get rid of the water, treat it to control mosquito larvae.
- **If mosquitoes are biting, you may want to treat your yard with an insecticide\*.** Used carefully and properly, an insecticide can help control biting mosquitoes. Pay particular attention to bushy green plants, ivy, other ground-covering plants and bamboo, which provide good hiding places for mosquitoes. Insecticides for your yard are available at your local hardware or home and garden store.
- **Organize a neighborhood clean-up.** Get rid of litter and debris, discard old tires and manage vegetation that mosquitoes may be using as hiding places.

#### Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites:

- **Wear insect repellent\* containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535 as the active ingredient.**
- **Wear loose-fitting, light-colored long-sleeved shirts and pants to minimize your exposure to mosquitoes.**
- **Keep doors and windows closed and make sure screens are in good repair.**  
*\*Use EPA-registered insecticides, larvicides and repellents. Follow label instructions.*

While these precautions will help prevent mosquito bites, it is still important to watch out for the signs and symptoms of mosquito-borne viruses like Zika and West Nile.

Symptoms of Zika include fever, rash, joint pain, muscle pain, headache and conjunctivitis (red eyes). Symptoms of West Nile virus range from mild (fever, headache, body aches or a skin rash on the upper body) to serious (high fever, headache, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, tremors, convulsions, weakness, paralysis or coma).

Consult your physician if you think you may be sick with a mosquito-borne illness.

Keeping mosquitoes away is not only good for your quality of life; it's good for your health!

For more information, visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fighthebite>, call 703-246-8931 or email to [fighthebite@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:fighthebite@fairfaxcounty.gov).

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