

# MOSQUITO CONTROL IN PINELLAS COUNTY



**PINELLAS COUNTY** uses a tactical approach to control mosquitoes. This begins with careful monitoring of the mosquito population through traps located around the county. Mosquitoes are more prevalent in the hot, rainy months of the year but, even when general drought conditions exist in the county, they can remain in swampy and tidal areas. Pinellas County Mosquito Control combats mosquito breeding by:

- Applying mosquito larvicide to targeted bodies of water and swampy areas
- Clearing vegetation that stops the natural flushing of ponds and ditches
- Spraying insecticide by truck or helicopter in infested areas

## DID YOU KNOW?

*Mosquitoes are attracted by the CO<sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide) exhaled from our breath, which they can detect from great distances.*

Pinellas County carefully monitors viruses through “sentinel” chickens caged in eight target locations. Routine blood tests on these chickens detect virus antibodies—an early alert that a virus is present locally.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- **Pinellas County Public Works Mosquito Control Division**  
(727) 464-7503 • [www.pinellascounty.org/mosquito](http://www.pinellascounty.org/mosquito)
- **Pinellas County Extension**  
(727) 582-2100 • [www.pinellascountyextension.org](http://www.pinellascountyextension.org)
- **Pinellas County Animal Services**  
(727) 582-2600 • [www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices)
- **Pinellas County Health Department**  
(727) 824-6932 • [www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com)



333 Chestnut Street  
Clearwater, Florida 33756

(727) 464-4600  
[www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)

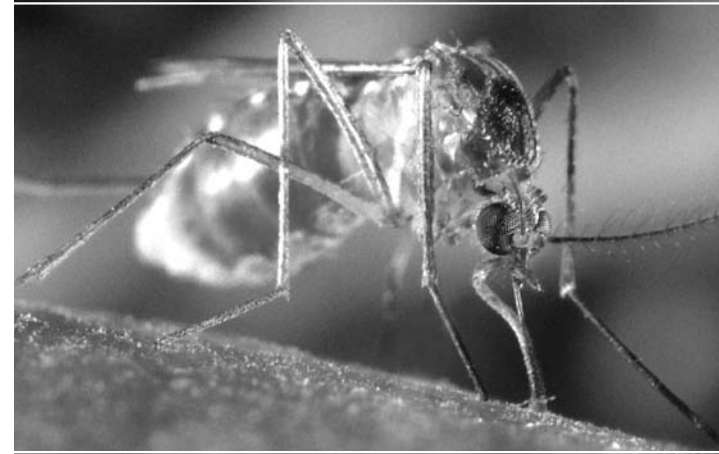


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*Produced in cooperation with Pinellas County Mosquito Control.*

# Get the **BUZZ** on Protecting Yourself From

# MOSQUITOES





# Why are mosquitoes a problem?



Outdoor fun such as gardening, sports and a quiet evening outside can be ruined by buzzing, biting mosquitoes. Besides that annoying itch, mosquitoes can carry deadly diseases such as West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis—even canine heartworm.

**WEST NILE VIRUS** has the potential to infect horses and humans. Mosquitoes obtain the virus from feeding on infected birds. People infected with the West Nile virus can experience mild to severe flu-like symptoms. While usually mild, in serious cases the symptoms can cause death. There is no vaccine to prevent West Nile virus. Prevention centers on controlling mosquitoes and avoiding mosquito bites.

**ST. LOUIS ENCEPHALITIS** can affect the central nervous system and cause severe complications, even death. Mosquitoes can transmit the virus to animals and humans after feeding on infected birds. Just like West Nile virus, there is no vaccine to prevent St. Louis encephalitis.

**CANINE HEARTWORM** is a mosquito-borne parasite that lives in a dog's heart and lungs. The worms, which can grow up to a foot long, multiply until they clog the heart's major vessels and cause life-threatening heart failure. Cats can also be infected. The disease is transmitted when a mosquito bites an infected animal and then bites another. Heartworms can be prevented and heartworm disease can be treated.

**PINELLAS COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL** encourages you to remember the **3 Ds** to protect yourself and your family:

## DRESS WISELY

Wear light-colored clothing that covers most of your skin, especially if you have to be out when mosquitoes are active.

## DEFEND

Choose a mosquito repellent that has been registered, approved and recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency.

- Choose a repellent with DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus.
- Read the directions on the label carefully before applying.
- Apply repellent sparingly, only to exposed skin.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that DEET-based repellents can be used on children as young as two months of age and recommends concentrations of 30 percent or less.

## DRAIN STANDING WATER

Stop mosquitoes where they're born—the standing water where mosquitoes lay their eggs. Mosquitoes can develop in any water that stands more than four days. Two types of domestic mosquitoes are a common problem in Pinellas County: the yellow fever mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, and the Asian tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*. These mosquitoes, called "ankle-biters" because they tend to bite people below the knee, can quickly colonize a neighborhood, finding standing water wherever available. One mosquito will try to bite, then fly away at the slightest movement and continue the process until it gets a blood meal, making one mosquito seem like several.

## YOU CAN JOIN THE FIGHT TO CONTROL MOSQUITOES!

- Regularly check and empty water in items such as flower pots and saucers, wheelbarrows, trash cans, recycling containers, buckets, discarded tires and plastic wading pools. Drill holes in tire-swings to prevent water collection.
- Store small boats upside down to keep water out.
- Be sure that rain doesn't collect in tarps covering boats or other stored items.
- Replace water in bird baths at least once a week.
- Change the water in pet dishes daily.
- Clean out gutters so they won't hold water.
- Flush out bromeliads twice weekly or treat bromeliads, ornamental ponds and rain barrels with larvicide, available at local home and garden stores.
- Stock ponds with fish that eat mosquito larvae.

**MOSQUITO LARVAE DEVELOP IN STANDING WATER**



Only female mosquitoes bite for blood to provide protein for egg formation. Male and female mosquitoes feed on plant nectar and juices.