



MOSQUITO PREVENTION TIPS

*Bergen County Executive Kathleen A. Donovan Advises Residents to
Take Simple Precautions*

It's time to take important steps to protect yourself and your family against West Nile Virus (WNV) infection and mosquito annoyance in general.

WNV is transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, so it's important to take steps to prevent getting mosquito bites and to clean or remove items on your property that can serve as mosquito breeding grounds.

Individuals can take a number of measures around the home to help eliminate mosquito-breeding areas, including:

- Dispose of cans, buckets, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar containers that hold water on your property.
- Properly dispose of discarded tires that can collect water. Stagnant water is where most mosquitoes breed.
- Drill drainage holes in the bottom of outdoor recycling containers.
- Clean clogged roof gutters every year, particularly if the leaves from surrounding trees tend to plug drains.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and don't let water stagnate in birdbaths.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools not in use and remove any water that may collect on pool covers.

For stagnant pools of water, homeowners can buy Bti products at lawn and garden, outdoor supply, home improvement and other stores. This naturally occurring bacteria kills mosquito larva, but is safe for people, pets, aquatic life and plants.

Additionally, these simple precautions can prevent mosquito bites, particularly for people who are most at risk:

- Make sure screens fit tightly over doors and windows to keep mosquitoes out of homes.

- Consider wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks when outdoors, particularly when mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk, or in areas known for having large numbers of mosquitoes.
- When possible, reduce outdoor exposure at dawn and dusk during peak mosquito periods, usually April through October.
- Use insect repellants according to the manufacturer's instructions. An effective repellant will contain DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Consult with a pediatrician or family physician if you have questions about the use of repellant on children, as repellant is not recommended for children under the age of two months.

WNV is an arboviral disease which people can acquire through the bite of a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird. WNV is not directly transmitted from birds to humans. About one in 150 persons, or less than 1 percent of those infected with West Nile virus will develop a more severe form of the disease. Symptoms of more serious illness include severe headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis. The elderly are at higher risk of more severe disease.

Bergen County's WNV surveillance, control, and prevention activities involve the coordinated efforts of a number of federal, state and local agencies. These include DHSS, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State Mosquito Control Commission, the Rutgers Center for Vector Biology, local and Bergen County Health Departments, and of course our Bergen County Department of Public Works Division of Mosquito Control.



For more information about mosquito control in Bergen County, call the Health Hotline: 201-225-7000 or check the website: <http://www.co.bergen.nj.us/index.aspx?nid=325>

To contact the Bergen County Division of Mosquito Control about a mosquito problem, call 201-634-2880.



Kathleen A. Donovan
Bergen County Executive

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