

Mosquito Control

Mosquitoes can pose a potential health risk as transmitters of diseases such as encephalitis and the West Nile Virus. A single water-filled bucket can produce a new generation of hundreds of biting mosquitoes every few days. Most disease causing mosquitoes spend their entire lives within 300 feet of their breeding site. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in water. Larvae hatch from the eggs and develop into flying adults. Anything in your yard that holds water can be a breeding site for mosquitoes. You can help reduce the mosquito population around your home by eliminating the conditions mosquitoes need to breed:

- Empty, remove, cover or turn over any container that has the potential to hold water
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets.
- Make sure gutters and downspouts are free of blockages and are properly draining.
- Empty wading pools weekly and store indoors when not in use.
- Properly dispose of old tires.
- Change water and scrub vases that hold flowers or cuttings twice each week.
- Empty bird baths twice weekly.
- Empty your pet's watering dishes daily.
- Drain or fill low areas on your property that hold water for more than three days.

The Franklin County Board of Health installs and monitors mosquito traps throughout the Township from early summer to mid fall for the incidence of West Nile virus and La Crosse encephalitis in the mosquito population. If surveillance shows an increasing number of diseased mosquitoes and an unusually large number of mosquitoes that test positive for West Nile Virus in a trap, the area will be sprayed. Spraying is effective on the adult population only and does not kill egg or larval stages.

Spraying for Mosquitoes

When done properly, spraying for mosquitoes is an effective way to reduce the numbers of mosquitoes and reduce residents' risk of contracting mosquito-borne diseases.

In order to be effective, spraying must coincide with the time of day the mosquitoes are most active. For the mosquitoes that carry West Nile Virus, that means spraying around twilight and early evening or early morning hours.

Licensed and trained Board of Health staff apply pesticides intended specifically for mosquito control. The chemicals are registered with the U.S. EPA and Department of Agriculture, and are applied according to federal and state laws.

The county operates ultra-low-volume spray machines that are computer controlled and calibrated to apply extremely small amounts of pesticide over large areas. One of the products used is Anvil[®], manufactured by Clarke Mosquito Control Products, Inc. A typical application is about one teaspoon of active ingredient per acre.

With the same amount of pesticide in one can of Raid[®] Yard Guard Outdoor Fogger, the county can treat 29.7 acres with ultra-low-volume technology.

The chemicals used by the Franklin County Board of Health do not persist in the environment; they break down within hours in water, are destroyed rapidly by light, and will decompose when exposed to air. The morning after an application, the amount of residual pesticide on exterior surfaces will be negligible.

To greatly reduce your exposure during spraying, you can take the following precautionary steps:

- Whenever possible, remain indoors with windows closed when spraying is taking place.
- Bring laundry and toys indoors before spraying begins. Wash with soap and water if exposed to pesticides during spraying.
- Bring your pets indoors, and turn off aerators in ornamental fishponds to avoid direct exposure.
- Cover outdoor tables and play equipment or rinse them off after spraying is finished.
- Wash exposed skin surfaces with soap and water if you come in contact with pesticides.
- Wash any exposed fruits and vegetables with water before storing, cooking or eating.
- Wait about one hour before allowing children to play in areas that have been sprayed.
- For your safety and the safety of our operators, please do not approach or follow a spray truck when it is operating. If you are in a vehicle, please try to find an alternate route.