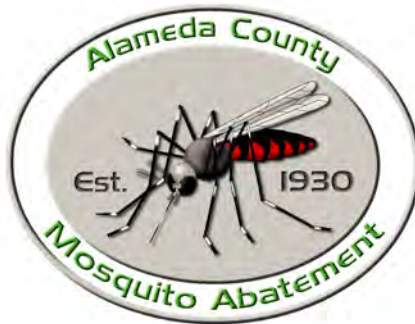


# Mosquito Abatement, West Nile Virus and You

Answers to some questions and  
suggestions for the homeowner



## Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District

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***An Independent Special District serving  
Alameda County residents since 1930***

# What is West Nile Virus?

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne disease that has been found in parts of Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The virus was first detected in the United States in 1999 in New York City and in a matter of five years it spread throughout the continental United States. Most people and animals who become infected with the virus have only a mild illness or no symptoms, but in rare cases can become seriously ill. The types of mosquitoes that can transmit WNV are common mosquitoes in Alameda County. Our goal is to decrease the numbers of mosquitoes in the county thereby minimizing WNV transmission.

## What we are doing...

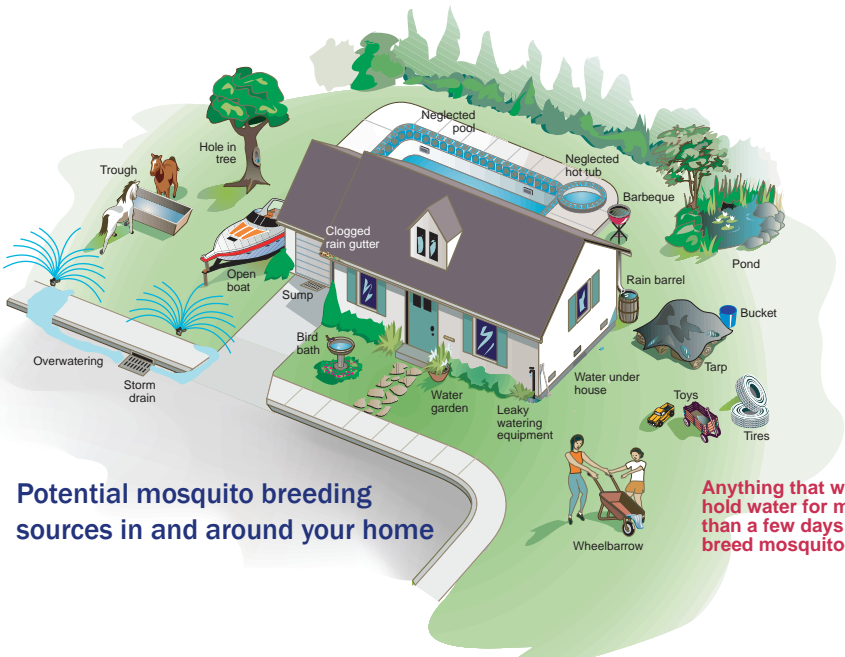
The Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District is very concerned about West Nile Virus. We are taking numerous steps to combat its presence in the county. Some of these are:

- hiring seasonal help to increase our larval surveillance program (checking water more frequently for immature mosquitoes)
- increasing the trapping of adult mosquitoes for disease testing and population evaluation
- providing increased training for all our employees
- maintaining sentinel chicken flocks (which act as "early warning systems" for the presence of WNV)
- participating in a state-wide dead bird surveillance program (call 877-WNV-BIRD if you find one)
- coordinating our response plan with other agencies

# What you can do...

There are many ways to protect yourself from mosquitoes. Mosquitoes need water to complete their lifecycle, so if you can eliminate standing water on your property, we will be ahead of the game! The following are suggestions to prevent mosquitoes from breeding near your home and decreasing the chances of being bitten by them:

- stock your fishpond with free mosquitofish from us
- eliminate all standing water on your property, and ask your neighbors to do the same
- put screens on all your windows and doors, and make sure they fit tightly
- minimize outside activity at dawn and dusk and when mosquitoes are most active
- when outside for extended periods, wear long sleeve shirts and long pants and use insect repellent containing DEET (follow label directions carefully)
- keep outside lighting to a minimum near entry doors (some mosquitoes are attracted to lights)



# Checklist of Common Mosquito Sources

- Fishpond Stock with mosquitofish (provided free by us), remove excess vegetation and construct properly
- Swimming pool Keep sanitized and filtered; keep water off any cover; stock with fish if no longer being maintained
- Spa, hot tub Keep sanitized, filtered and heated; if no longer in use, keep empty or remove it
- Bird bath Flush out completely once a week and refill
- Containers Empty, turn over, throw out or cover any container to prevent water from accumulating
- Leaky pipes Drain the area; correct leaky plumbing, dripping air conditioner or refrigerator; water under houses is a major source of mosquitoes in urban areas
- Catch basin, storm drains Do not throw garbage or garden debris into these as it enhances mosquito habitat
- Sump Construct so that water does not stand, or screen to prevent mosquito entrance
- Standing water If water stands for more than a week eliminate it by draining or filling
- Tires Dispose of properly or cover so that water does not collect inside
- Treeholes Inspect for breeding during the rainy season; if breeding, consult a licensed arborist or tree service to determine the best method of eliminating water
- Septic tank Keep tightly covered or eliminate; septic tanks can produce huge numbers of mosquitoes
- Watering trough Stock with our free mosquitofish or change the water weekly
- Creek Do not throw garbage or garden debris into creeks - these obstructions can create mosquito habitat
- Irrigation Don't over-irrigate your landscaping; excess water can provide mosquito habitat

For updated West Nile Virus information, please visit our website: [www.mosquitoes.org](http://www.mosquitoes.org) or the California Department of Public Health website: [www.westnile.ca.gov](http://www.westnile.ca.gov)