

Preventive Measures against Northern House Mosquito

Like all mosquitoes, the northern house mosquito requires standing water for the first stages of development. Consequently, the elimination of potential breeding sites of this mosquito should be undertaken as part of a comprehensive mosquito abatement program. The following preventive measures require the cooperation of local government officials and local citizens.

1. Clean and properly discard excess catch basins (curbside runoff drains) that hold water.
2. Cut, remove and properly discard excess overhanging vegetation along or over the banks of drainage ditches or stagnant slow-moving streams, especially those that receive effluent from sewerage treatment plants or where waste may enter a stream.
3. Cut, remove and properly discard excess vegetation and weeds around margins of cannery waste lagoons, hog lagoons, sewage lagoons and similar operations, so that a shaded canopy of vegetation is not allowed to provide an ideal environment for the development of the northern house mosquito. Also, remove any floating vegetation that will provide a protected area for mosquito larvae.
4. Clean out debris, broken tree limbs and objects that impede the normal stream flow so polluted pockets of water do not remain. Also, remove discarded artificial containers.
5. Prevent discharge of improperly treated sewerage effluent into drainage ditches and other low areas by assuring that private sewerage systems are installed to meet applicable local, state and federal codes.

Local residents, both urban and rural, should be encouraged to participate with local officials in the implementation of preventive measures, including the following:

1. Collect and properly discard all useless artificial containers such as tins cans, bottles, buckets, vases and old tire casings.
2. In the spring, inspect and clean rain gutters and downspouts; if they are blocked by leaves or other debris, they can hold water.
3. Stack, pails, buckets, tubs, vases, wheelbarrows and similar containers upside down so water does not accumulate in them.
4. Cover or store canoes and boats upside down.
5. Stock garden pools and lily ponds with small fish, such as "mosquitofish." *Gambusia affinis*.
6. Fill or drain any low places where water may stand for more than a week. (Consult appropriate regulatory agencies before filling any wetlands.)
7. Empty and clean small wading pools at least once a week.
8. Properly maintain backyard swimming pools to discourage the development of mosquitoes by draining and covering any pool not in use so rainwater and leaves do not accumulate in it. Also, be sure the cover does not hold pockets of water.
9. Drain livestock water tanks once each week.
10. Cover rain barrels, cisterns or fire barrels with 16-mesh wire screening.
11. Install splash blocks around homes to carry water away from foundations.