

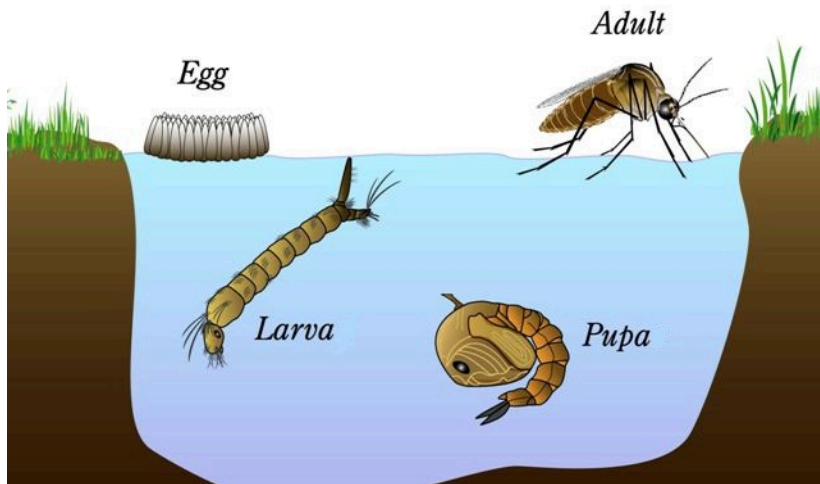
MOSQUITO FACTS

Mosquitoes are an all too familiar pest in Saint Louis County. Aside from being a nuisance, they can also present a potential health threat by transmitting diseases such as encephalitis to humans and heartworm to pets.

Most mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water where they hatch in as little as five days. Other mosquitoes lay eggs in dry flood prone areas where they can remain viable for up to five years. These eggs hatch once they are covered with water during spring rains and flooding. After hatching, mosquito larvae quickly grow before changing into pupae. Soon the skin of the pupae splits open and the adult mosquitoes emerge. Female mosquitoes bite humans and other animals, as they require the protein of a blood meal in order to produce their eggs. Male mosquitoes will only feed on plant nectar and do not bite humans.

Adult mosquitoes frequently rest in high grass, shrubbery or other foliage. All other mosquito stages (egg, larvae and pupae) require standing water in which to develop.

To help prevent bites, try to avoid being outdoors around dusk and dawn, as those are the times mosquitoes are most active. When outdoors, wear light colored, loose fitting clothing and use an approved mosquito repellent according to its label directions.



HOW VECTOR CONTROL CAN HELP CONTROL MOSQUITOES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Saint Louis County Vector Control provides mosquito control services to residents of all unincorporated areas and to contracting municipalities of Saint Louis County. This service includes treatment of adult and larval mosquitoes. Vector Control treats standing water on **public property and easements** to reduce the mosquito population in those neighborhoods. Vector Control uses only environmentally friendly pesticides when treating standing water for mosquito larvae.

SURVEILLANCE

Saint Louis County Vector Control conducts a surveillance program to monitor the population size and disease levels of mosquitoes in Saint Louis County. The information collected from trapped mosquitoes assists in the decision-making process of where treatment is needed most.

LARVICIDING

An effective and economical way to reduce mosquito outbreaks is by treating the standing water where they breed. Vector Control has established larviciding routes that cover most of Saint Louis County. We also investigate complaints from residents regarding possible breeding sites. Our routes include ditches, drains, sewers, sewage basins, creeks, swamps, ponds, and other chronic breeding locations. We monitor these sites from mid April through October and treat them if mosquito larvae are found.

ADULTICIDING

Vector Control sprays for mosquitoes in areas where trapping indicates high levels of mosquito activity. We also spray areas where trapped mosquitoes test positive for diseases such as West Nile Virus. Our adulticiding (night fogging) program usually runs from May through October. Weather permitting, adulticiding occurs between sunset and sunrise. Remember that treating adult mosquitoes is only a temporary solution. Elimination of breeding sites and stopping mosquitoes while they are still in the water are much more effective and economical ways to control mosquitoes.

HOW YOU CAN HELP PREVENT MOSQUITOES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

If there are any places around your home where water collects, – **YOU COULD BE RAISING MOSQUITOES!**

- Properly discard or recycle old tires, tin cans, jars, buckets, pots, drums and other containers, or store them so they do not collect water.
- Maintain or treat pools and be sure to drain pool covers when pools are not in use.
- Cover or store boats, canoes, and wheelbarrows upside down when not in use. Be sure to remove drain plugs so water does not collect in your boat.
- Empty small plastic wading pools, children's play items and birdbaths weekly.
- Change water and rinse ornamental containers holding plants once a week—or grow cuttings in sand.
- Empty and refill pets' water dishes daily.
- Fill holes in trees with sand.
- Repair leaky pipes, outside faucets, and faulty septic fields. Don't let runoff water accumulate.
- Clean clogged roof gutters and drain flat roofs.
- Report any problems with sewer or storm creeks causing standing water to Metropolitan Sewer District. Remember, it's illegal to dump grass clippings, branches, or other items into storm creeks.

Mosquitoes will only develop in water...and water standing for just one week can produce a crop of mosquitoes. **Remember:** eliminating standing water is the best way to reduce mosquitoes.

MOSQUITOES OF PUBLIC HEALTH SIGNIFICANCE IN THE ST. LOUIS AREA

Culex pipiens complex: (Northern House Mosquito)

Culex is the most common disease vector in St. Louis County. They are linked to outbreaks of St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE) and West Nile Virus (WNV). *C. pipiens* is light brown, with a blunt abdomen and can be found in rural and urban areas. *C. pipiens* lays eggs in water with high organic content, such as sewage basins, drains, and ponds. *C. pipiens* are most often active after dusk and before dawn.

Aedes vexans. (Flood Water Mosquito) *Aedes vexans* is one of the most widespread mosquitoes in the world. They have a light brown, pointed abdomen with stripes. They are vicious biters and are responsible for most of our mosquito nuisance complaints. *Ae. vexans* is not a major carrier of human disease in St. Louis County, however they are a vector for dog heartworm. This mosquito comes out in huge numbers from floodwaters in spring and early summer. *Ae. vexans* are able to travel up to 20 miles from where they emerge, making them a difficult species to treat.

Aedes albopictus: (Asian Tiger mosquito) This aggressive mosquito is mostly black with white stripes along its abdomen and legs and a white stripe down the middle of its back. It was originally introduced into the United States from a shipment of tires from Asia. *Ae. albopictus* tend to breed out of small containers and generally remain close to where they emerge. If you have them, chances are they came from standing water on your property or a neighboring property. They are active mostly during the day and thrive in hot weather, especially July, August, and September. In Saint Louis County, *Ae. albopictus* is predominantly a nuisance mosquito.

HOME TREATMENT

If you wish to spray your yard or treat standing water on your property to control larval and adult mosquitoes, your local hardware store or garden center can recommend insecticides or natural repellants that are effective and approved by the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency). Be sure to follow all label instructions carefully.



Saint Louis County Vector Control

(314) 615-0680

St. Louis County Spray Hotline

(314)615-4284

National Pesticide Network

1-800-858-7378

HOW TO CONTROL MOSQUITOES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD



Saint Louis
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