

CALVERT COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO CONTROL MOSQUITOES IN YOUR YARD



There are approximately 30 species of *mosquitoes* found in Calvert County. Not all of them carry diseases but many do and no one wants to be annoyed by mosquitoes or suffer from their bites. Of specific concern is the *Zika virus* that is carried by a member of the *Aedes* genus, which has not been seen in Calvert County.

You should always try to protect yourself and your family against mosquito bites and you can do this by eliminating places for them to breed. Mosquitoes can breed in a thimble full of water and some species can complete the cycle from egg to adult in as little as a week. Look around your home for standing water and dump it in less than a week. You won't be 100% effective but you will reduce their numbers before they hatch.

OUTDOORS

Check everything outdoors that can hold water for more than 6 days.

Buckets & Other Containers: Empty frequently or store properly. Keep your recycling box indoors or covered so cans and containers do not catch and hold rain water.

Wading Pools: Check for larvae and empty the wading pools frequently.

Childrens' Toys: Many toys and containers have rims that catch and hold water. During a rainy spell, water can stand in them over 6 days.

Saucers under Flower Pots: Empty them every 5-6 days or avoid using them.

Bird Baths: Clean and dump them every 4-5 days--they're usually in need of cleaning by then anyway.

Tarps covering furniture or equipment: Small pools of water can collect in low places—check and dump them frequently.

Gutters: Some are not level and do not drain properly—try to mop up standing water if it collects. Keep debris cleaned out so they don't stop up.

Drain tile: Mosquitoes can get through the slits into the drain tile and lay eggs in the grooves inside. Bury the drain tile and connect it to the downspout with solid tubing or use solid tubing to carry water away from down spouts. Old nylons (if anyone wears them any more) can be used to put over the end to keep mosquitoes from entering.

Trash Cans: Keep them covered or drill holes in the bottom so they will drain.

Still Ponds or Pools: Calvert County will provide mosquito fish free of charge to residents. It is native to the Chesapeake Bay and loves mosquito larvae! Go to <http://www.co.cal.md.us/index.aspx?NID=106> or call 410-535-6924.

Mosquito Dunks: Several brands are available. Use according to manufacturer directions and change periodically.

Rain Barrels: Screens covering them should be secured so mosquitoes can't enter. Rims and pockets should drain or be mopped out. Dunks can be used in them.

Provide Habitat: *Almost all birds eat insects as part of their diet.*

Even hummingbirds feed small insects, including mosquitoes, to their young.

Dragonfly larvae devour mosquito larvae in the water before they hatch!

Use pesticides sparingly and specifically!

*Pesticides kill **only** adult mosquitoes and may harm other creatures that may be beneficial in controlling the mosquitoes.*

INDOORS AND PERSONAL PROTECTION

Screens: Check them for holes or gaps that may allow mosquitoes to enter.

Plant Cuttings Rooted in Water: If mosquitoes are indoors, they may lay eggs in the bottles or containers. Check them frequently and dump the water if you see larvae swimming in them.

Personal Protection Outdoors: Wear light-colored, long pants and long-sleeved shirts. There are a number of insect repellants available—use them according to manufacturer recommendations when you are outdoors.

For More Information On-line: www.co.cal.md.us/MosquitoControl;

University of Maryland Extension Home & Garden Information Center:

http://extension.umd.edu/sites/default/files/images/programs/hgic/Publications/non_HGIC_FS/FS811.pdf

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