



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2022

Act Now and Keep Mosquito Bites to a Minimum

VENTURA, California – Mosquito Awareness Week is April 17-23, and it is a reminder that it is more important than ever to eliminate standing water from your property. In addition to the native mosquito species, some of which can transmit West Nile Virus, the invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquito has become established and is spreading in many areas of Ventura County. The first specimen of 2022 was recently collected in a trap in Meiners Oaks. These small aggressive mosquitoes are day-biting, can breed in as little as a teaspoon of water, and have evolved to survive and thrive in and around our homes. *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes have the potential to transmit several viruses, including dengue, chikungunya, Zika, and yellow fever. These viruses are not currently known to be transmitted within California, but now that these mosquitoes are present, an infected traveler returning to our area could be a source of local transmission.

The most effective means of controlling these mosquitoes is to prevent the eggs and larvae from developing in water. In addition to maintaining your swimming pool or spa, ornamental water features can be stocked with mosquito fish. Homeowners are also encouraged to adjust irrigation timers and watering practices to prevent excessive runoff and accumulation. The public must be vigilant about all conditions that allow these mosquitoes to develop:

- Remove all objects in your yard or patio such as children's toys, tires, bottles and cans that may catch and hold water for more than a week.
- Cover yard drains with highly permeable irrigation cloth and clear outlets of debris to eliminate standing water.
- Remove saucers under potted plants or fill them with sand.
- Change the water in pet dishes, birdbaths, and other small containers weekly.

Eggs are often deposited just above the water line and may remain viable for a year or more so objects that can hold water should be discarded, altered or stored to prevent water collecting, or drained and scrubbed to remove eggs weekly.

Residents can reduce the chances of being bitten day or night by *Aedes aegypti* or other mosquitoes by taking the following precautions. Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens; when outdoors, wear loose, protective clothing such as long sleeve shirts, long pants,

socks, and shoes when mosquitoes are most active and apply an EPA approved insect repellent, <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/prevention/prevent-mosquito-bites.html>.

The Division monitors and controls mosquitoes at approximately 2,800 mosquito breeding sources throughout Ventura County. The Division is asking the public to assist with the mosquito control effort by reporting mosquito activity and potential mosquito breeding sites if they aren't being eliminated or controlled by the property owner or resident. The Mosquito complaint HOTLINE is at **805/658-4310**, or go to <https://eco.vcrma.org/> to file a complaint online.

Mosquito-eating fish are available to the public for use in ornamental ponds and water features. To request mosquito-eating fish call **805/662-6582**. To report dead birds for WNV testing, contact the California Department of Public Health at **877/WNV-Bird (877/968-2473)** or visit westnile.ca.gov.

For additional information, visit: <https://vcrma.org/vector-control-program>

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