

Many citizens don't know what the word "public health" really means. Most people think public health is only for the poor. While we do attend to the health needs of low-income families, we also provide many other services to practically all citizens living in our six-county area. Below are a few of the programs offered at Southwest District Health:

**Injury Prevention:** The goal of this program is to promote reduction in the incidence of unintentional injuries such as residential, recreational, school and traffic injuries. Contact: 455-5332

**HIV/AIDS & STD Prevention:** This service has a primary goal of reducing and preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infections. The STD Prevention Program has a trained, caring and experienced staff with up-to-date resources for the task of preventing and controlling STDs. Contact 455-5447

**Public Water Supply:** Promotes and maintains a physical, chemical, and biological environment which contributes positively to health, prevents illness, and assures protection of the public through the regulation and monitoring of public water systems. Contact: 455-5403

**Tobacco Cessation:** Provides free classes to help individuals stop smoking or chewing. Contact: 455-5321

**Water and Air Pollution:** Provides residents with a comprehensive array of water and air quality services and protections. Contact: 642-9321 ext. 15

If you are unable to reach a listed number or have an interest in other programs, please contact our Health Educator: 208-455-5321

For more information on  
mosquito control and  
mosquito abatement call the  
Vector Control Specialist at  
Southwest District Health  
(208) 455-5403



**Southwest  
District Health**  
920 Main Street  
Caldwell, Idaho 83605

*Southwest District Health serves the residents  
living in Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee,  
Payette and Washington Counties.*

Preventative measures section in this  
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Mosquito Control Project.

In-house brochure created June, 2001

# Mosquito Information



for  
Homeowners

## Basic Information

Mosquitoes require static water to breathe and reproduce. Most species lay eggs directly in water, while some lay eggs in areas that will later contain water. When temperatures and water conditions are ideal, the eggs hatch into larvae. The larvae stay near the water's surface where they are able to breathe and feed on microorganisms. Larvae frequent protected areas where they are safe from fish and other predators.

Well-vegetated and flood-irrigated fields create ideal breeding grounds, as will water filled tires, cans, or clogged rain gutters. Once the larval stages are over, the pupal phase begins. Pupa do not feed, but remain near the water's surface to breathe. Following the pupal stage, the mosquito will emerge from the pupa skin and wait until its body has hardened before flying away. When conditions are right, this process may take a week.

Female mosquitoes need the protein found in blood to produce eggs. Males do not bite, they feed on nectar from flowers near the breeding areas. If there are no warm-blooded animals near the breeding area, female mosquitoes will fly many miles in search of blood. Mosquitoes feed mainly on the blood of birds and mammals, as well as from humans. Most mosquitoes become active at sundown, but some species are active during daylight hours. During the day, most mosquitoes remain in tall grass and bushes. Spiders are natural

predators of adult mosquitoes. Bats and several bird species include mosquitoes in their diet.

Mosquitoes are disease vectors because they transmit disease organisms. Mosquitoes become infected with a virus or parasite after biting an infected animal. When mosquitoes bite another animal or a human being, the victim may become infected with the disease organism. Viral diseases transmitted in this manner include: Yellow Fever, Dengue Fever, Eastern and Western Equine Encephalitis, St.Louis Encephalitis and West Nile Encephalitis. Since each disease is spread by a particular mosquito species, it is important to identify the species in a given area. Malaria is transmitted from person to mosquito to person by the Anopheles species. Individuals planning to travel to areas where the above diseases are common should consult with their physician about preventative measures. The virus causing AIDS cannot be transmitted to humans by mosquitoes.

## Preventative Measures

Experience has shown mosquito control personnel that homeowners frequently create their own mosquito problems, while simple precautions are very effective in reducing mosquito populations. Following is a list of common objects that are frequently found to be mosquito breeding areas:

- **Rain Gutters:** When rain gutters are allowed to fill up with leaves, organic material, and the resultant water, ideal conditions for mosquito production are created.

- **Swimming Pools:** A whole neighborhood can be plagued by mosquitos from pools containing unclean water, algae and debris. Frequently, mosquito larvae hatch in March; therefore, removing pool covers and chlorinating all pools in the early spring will reduce mosquito numbers.
- **Tires:** Old tires or tire swings containing rainwater will hatch thousands of mosquitoes. Protecting tires from rainwater and putting a hole in tire swings will reduce mosquito breeding areas,
- **Flower Pots:** Flower pots without drain holes or pots with water holding trays can hold enough water to produce mosquitoes.
- **Garbage and Recycling cans:** Make sure garbage cans have a lid or a drain hole in the bottom.
- **Tarps:** Depressions in tarpaulins used to cover boats, hay, etc. may hold enough water to provide mosquito breeding areas.
- **Boats:** Boats or tarpaulin covering a boat can hold enough water to produce mosquitoes. Providing a drain in the boat, tightly covering the boat, storing the boat turned over or in a boathouse or garage will eliminate mosquito breeding areas.