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## MOZZIE MADNESS

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In recent years changing weather patterns have extended the mosquito breeding season. The mosquito is a social pest which not only bites and annoys both humans and animals but also spreads disease.

With an increase in the notifications of Ross River Virus in South Australia mosquito control is of high importance. Mosquitoes search for breeding sites which may be found around any home and the best way to control mosquitoes is to prevent them from breeding.

As mosquitoes breed in water, you can help reduce the number of mosquitoes in your area by removing or treating water storage around your property. Follow these simple steps to prevent mosquitoes breeding around your home. Tick the box when you have completed the action.

### Rainwater Tanks

Rainwater tanks, unless properly maintained, may readily become a major mosquito breeding site. Breeding can be prevented by exclusion of adult mosquitoes and/or control of mosquito larvae (wigglers) as described below.

- **Exclusion of Adult Mosquitoes**

- The first step is to ensure that any tops, lids, covers and inlet pipes are close fitting to exclude mosquitoes.
- A removable screen mesh should be fitted to the outlet end of the over-flow pipe.
- Water inlets entering the tank should also be screened to exclude the adult mosquito.

Screens should be positioned so that they are readily accessible for regular cleaning, particularly where leaves fall onto the catchment area (screens should be no coarser than 12 x 12 meshes per 25mm<sup>2</sup>).

Dissimilar metals and metal screens (copper or copper alloys) should not be used with galvanised or zincalume steel tanks as these materials can accelerate corrosion of the tanks. Check with tank manufacturers for further information.

Various in-line screens and filtering devices are marketed in South Australia and are available in most of the large hardware stores.

- **Control of Mosquito Larvae (Wrigglers)**

- As an interim measure a small quantity of domestic kerosene or paraffin oil (1-2 teaspoons) may be added to the water surface as a larvicide, (the amount will vary depending on the size of the tank) this film will be lost by evaporation or when the tank overflows and should be replaced every 3 - 4 weeks.

Kerosene may taint the water and should not be added in quantities greater than that suggested. It should not be applied when the water level in the tank is low.

### **Treatment for Other Breeding Sites**

- Keep swimming pools chlorinated or salted. If your pool is to be neglected for a period of time, for any reason, you could stock the pool with native fish.
- Dispose of all tins, jars, tyres and other rubbish items that may hold water.
- At least once a week empty all flower vases, pot plants and other receptacles that hold water. Thoroughly wipe the inside of containers with a cloth to remove mosquito eggs. Do not wash the cloth as that may spread the eggs.
- Put sand around the bases of pot plants to absorb water in the dish.
- Apply kerosene or liquid paraffin to the surface of unscreened containers of water and collections of water that cannot otherwise be effectively dealt with. This prevents the larvae from breathing and kills them.
- Keep roof guttering in good repair and regularly remove leaves and debris so that pools of water do not form. Cut back and trim trees to prevent leaves and debris from blocking roof guttering.
- Keep fish ponds and ornamental ponds stocked with fish. Goldfish and native Australian fish are recommended. Keep the side of ponds clear from water weeds so that fish can get to the larvae.
- Empty children's wading pools after use and clean thoroughly with a cloth to remove mosquito eggs.
- Drill holes in tyres used for swings and garden surrounds to allow water to drain from them.
- Empty bird baths and pets drinking water at least once a week and clean containers thoroughly to remove eggs.
- Boats, and dinghies should be overturned or have the drain plug removed so that they do not hold water after rain.

### **Personal Protection**

- Wear protective loose clothing covering arms and legs.
- Apply a mosquito repellent to all exposed areas of skin.
- Avoid outdoor activity one to three hours after sunset and again around dawn.
- Ensure that houses are insect screened and screens are kept in good repair.

*For your own comfort and that of your neighbours don't be guilty of contributing to "MOZZIE MADNESS". We urge you to assist in mosquito control by following the above recommendations.*

### **For Further Information**

For further information, please contact Council's Environmental Health Officer on (08) 8832 0000.