

MOZZIE MADNESS

IS002

Responsible Officer: EHO

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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.

Many mosquitoes commonly bite around dusk and dawn, but some species can bite during the day and throughout the night. With an increase in the notifications of arbovirus in South Australia, such as Ross River Virus, Japanese Encephalitis Virus and Barmah Forest virus (among other mosquito-borne diseases) mosquito control is of high importance.

The best way to protect yourself from mosquitoes is to by covering up using light long loose fitted clothes, use insect repellent and eliminate their breeding sources.

Follow these simple steps to prevent mosquitoes breeding around your home and to protect yourself and your family from being bitten. Tick the box when you have completed the action.

Water Tanks

Mosquitoes search for breeding sites which may be found around any home. Mosquitoes can breed in still, fresh or salty water, so you can help reduce the number of mosquitoes in your area by removing or treating water storage around your property.

Water tanks used to store rainwater, stormwater, and greywater, may readily become a major mosquito breeding site if they are not maintained. Breeding can be prevented by exclusion of adult mosquitoes and/or control of mosquito larvae (c) as described below.

Exclusion of Adult Mosquitoes

- ☐ Ensure 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.
- ☐ Do not allow water to pool in containers below the outlets or taps.

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 12x12 meshes per 25mm²).

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 may be added to the water surface as a larvicide, this film will be lost by evaporation or when the tank overflows and should be replaced every 3 - 4 weeks.

The amount will vary depending on the size of the tank. Add 5ml of kerosene or one teaspoon for a 1 kilolitre tank OR up to 15ml or 3 teaspoons for a 10 kilolitre tank. When using paraffin, double the dose. You should consult your rainwater tank manufacturer for more information.

Kerosene may taint the water and should not be added in quantities greater than that suggested. ***Do not apply kerosene when the water level in the tank is low.***

Treatment for Other Breeding Sites

- ☐ Keep swimming pools, maintained and disinfected. Empty or securely cover if not in use. chlorinated or salted.
- ☐ If your swimming pool/wading pool is for any reason to be neglected for a period of time it should be emptied or you could stock it with small Australian native fish to eat the larve.
- ☐ Empty children's wading pools after use and clean thoroughly with a cloth to remove mosquito eggs. Do not wash the cloth as that may spread the eggs.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 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. Do not wash the cloth as that may spread the eggs.
- ☐ Boats, canoes and dinghies should be overturned or have the drain plug removed so that they do not hold water after rain.
- ☐ Cover rainwater tank overflows, septic tank openings, wells or other large water containers with mosquito-proof mesh.
- ☐ 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 – do not apply these to pet water bowl containers.

Personal Protection for You and Your Family

- ☐ Wear protective loose clothing covering arms and legs.
- ☐ Apply mosquito repellent evenly to all areas of exposed skin, like you would apply sunscreen. *Always* follow the instructions on the label.
- ☐ Apply repellent to skin after the application of sunscreen.
- ☐ Avoid outdoor activity around dusk and dawn.
- ☐ Use mosquito-proof netting over prams and strollers.

Use mosquito repellents containing either DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (PMD), that have been approved by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

APVMA registered plant-based repellents can be used but be prepared to reapply more frequently, as they don't last as long.

For babies and toddlers it is important to follow these recommendations:

- Under 2 months of age - repellents are not recommended.
- From 2 months of age onwards - repellents containing 10% DEET can be used.
- From 12 months of age - repellents containing Picaridin can be used.
- From 3 years of age - repellents containing PMD (p-Menthane-3, 8-diol, the active ingredient in oil of lemon eucalyptus) can be used.

To protect babies and toddlers it is important to ensure they do not apply repellents themselves. Avoid applying repellents to their hands or near their eyes or mouth and wash their skin and clothes when you go back inside.

Always read and follow the instructions on the label, especially for babies and pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Prevent Mosquitos From Coming Inside

- ☐ Place mosquito-proof mesh on doors, windows, vents and chimneys and keep them in good repair.
- ☐ Cover your sleeping areas with mosquito nets or insect screens.
- ☐ Aerosol or surface insect sprays may be used to help control mosquitoes inside the home but always follow the instructions on the label.

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 visit SA Health's campaign or contact Council's Environmental Health Officer on (08) 8832 0000.