

# Controlling Mosquitos in Palm Beach County

Our program's purpose is to reduce the mosquito populations, protecting public comfort and health. Keeping the mosquito numbers down so that these insect pests are not a major annoyance to County residents is a continuous effort. Breaking the chain of transmission of mosquito borne diseases, such as St. Louis Encephalitis, is a periodic but intense effort.

Florida has the distinction of having over 70 species of mosquitoes – the greatest variety of mosquitoes of any state. The various species differ so much in their breeding places and habitats that control measures must be tailored to the species of mosquito occurring in each area at each time.



Mosquito control inspector looking for mosquito production sites.

Property owners who have a mosquito breeding source on their land are responsible for abating the nuisance and preventing its reoccurrence. Mosquito Control informs the property owners of the mosquito breeding *and* assists in working out a satisfactory correction.

## Mosquito Facts



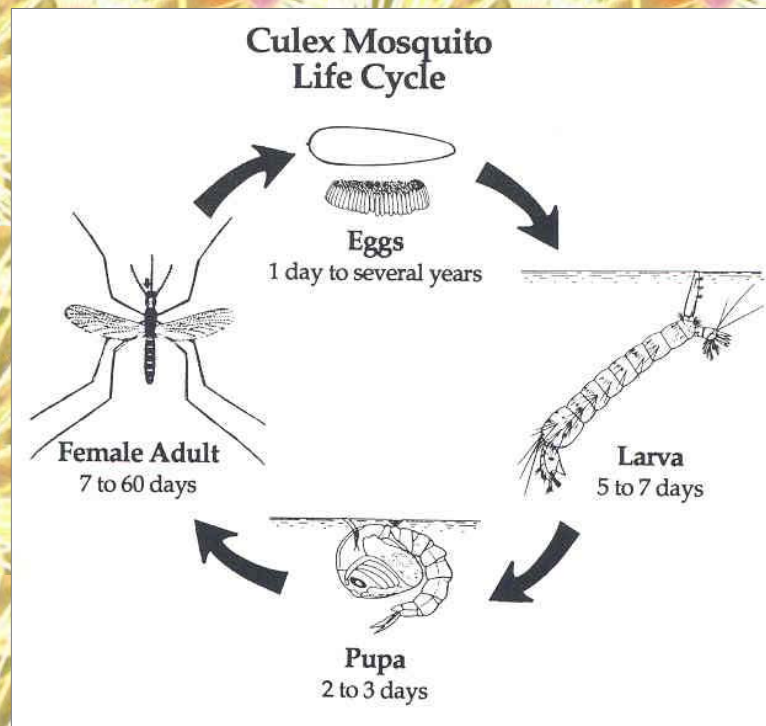
- | All mosquitos must have water to complete their life cycle.
- | Only seven days are required in warm weather for growth from egg to adult.
- | Tall grass or shrubbery provide resting sites for mosquito adults but are not breeding sites.
- | Only the female bites to obtain a blood meal.
- | The female mosquito may live several weeks in the summer and many months in the winter. If a female survives a long time, she may go through several cycles of blood feeding and egg laying.
- | Fish and frogs will control mosquito larvae in permanent bodies of water such as canals and lakes.



Hand spraying for larvae control.

Mosquito Control focuses much of its effort on wiping out mosquitoes before they become adults. Chronic breeding sources created by standing water in street catch basins, subdivision drains, roadside drains and grassy swales, flood channels, and similar places on public right-of-ways are controlled by routine larviciding operations with *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*, a natural pathogen of mosquito larvae.

Adult mosquitoes are controlled using ultra-low volume spraying machines at night. The spraying machines, mounted on a truck or attached to aircraft, are dispatched when adult mosquitoes are observed in high numbers – detected in monitoring traps or by inspectors or when an outbreak of mosquito-borne disease occurs.



Truck-mounted spraying machine.

## Mosquitoes: An Historical Perspective

Palm Beach County, with its subtropical climate and its heavy rainfall, is a fertile breeding ground for mosquitoes. Mosquito Control is one of the longest established services the County provides to the public. Eradication of malaria and yellow fever was accomplished during the first part of the century under the direction of the Health Department. A separate Mosquito Control Department was created in 1941 to primarily control the huge numbers of salt-marsh mosquitoes biting the coastal residents.

Salt-marsh mosquitoes were brought under control by the mid-1970's by a series of permanent control projects involving the construction of drainage ditches in the mangrove swamps. However, by the 1980's the settlement of the areas away from the coast exploded, bringing people in contact with a large variety of fresh-water mosquito species which had never before been the target of control efforts.

The earliest settlers were plagued with mosquito-borne epidemics of malaria, yellow fever and dengue fever. Through effective mosquito control and improved standard of living, these diseases were eradicated from the County but the potential for reproduction still exists. Certain types Encephalitis, principally St. Louis encephalitis, continue to pose a threat to humans.

Mosquito Control is changing with the times and technology. Increasing the use of biological control agents is reducing the need for pesticides to protect human health and comfort.



**Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners**

Department of  
Environmental Resources  
Management

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Visit Palm Beach County web sites at:  
[www.co.palm-beach.fl.us](http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us)  
[www.pbcgov.com](http://www.pbcgov.com)

## Are you Raising Mosquitoes in Your Backyard?

*This is where you can look to find out  
and what to do about it:*

- 1. Ornamental Pond:** Stock with fish.
- 2. Swimming Pool:** Operate filter and skimmer continuously. A single dose of chlorination will not solve problem, so maintain adequate chlorine level.
- 3. Boat:** Bail out standing water and check bilge for larvae.
- 4. Animal watering trough:** Stock with fish.
- 5. Roof Drains:** Make sure to keep cleaned and cleared.
- 6. Water holding plants such as bromeliads:** Add a little cooking oil to the water in the plant.
- 7. Containers of all sorts such as tires, buckets, watering pans under potted plants, wading pool:** Discard unwanted ones and store remainder upside-down.

### Inspector's Comments

yes	no	Finding
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult mosquitoes were found.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ULV spraying was ordered.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Breeding area was found:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Owner of property was not home and inspector cannot properly evaluate the problem. Please call the office between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. for more information.

# Mosquito Control



**Palm Beach County**

Department of

**Environmental**

**Resources**

**Management**