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Social Services | Public Health | Behavioral Health

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Health officials recommend taking these precautions to help avoid mosquitoes

Recently, the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Environmental Health (DEH) has received an increased number of public inquiries about mosquitoes in and around Humboldt Bay and coastal areas.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), taking the following precautions is the best way to avoid mosquitoes and mosquito bites.

Remove standing water where mosquitoes breed-

- Mosquitoes lay eggs near and on the surface of water and health officials recommend taking time each week to empty and scrub, turn over or cover or dispose of items that hold water like tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers or trash containers
- Tightly cover water storage containers (buckets, water tanks and rain barrels) so mosquitoes cannot get inside to lay eggs
- For containers without lids, use wire mesh/screens with holes smaller than an adult mosquito
- Fill tree holes to prevent them from filling with water
- If you have a septic tank, repair cracks or gaps. Cover open vent or plumbing pipes with wire mesh/screens with holes smaller than an adult mosquito
- Mosquito fish can be used in ornamental ponds, watering troughs and abandoned pools.

Mosquito prevention in the home-

- Ensure doors, windows, vents and other penetrations are properly screened
- Do not leave doors propped open
- Visually inspect for mosquitoes before bed. Check ceilings, closets, windows and curtains where mosquitoes tend to hide.

According to the CDC, one of the best ways to avoid mosquito bites is to stay inside at dawn and dusk when insects are most active. People who are going to be outside during those times are advised to wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, shoes and socks.

Certain species of mosquitoes are known to harbor and spread West Nile Virus (WNV) which has been observed in Humboldt County in the past. Since 2003, there have been a total of four reported cases of WNV, the most recent from 2018. Despite the apparent low risk, DEH recommends Humboldt County residents follow the above guidelines to prevent overpopulation of mosquitoes and prevent mosquito bites.

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