



For Immediate Release

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Mosquito Season Heats Up Just as California Reopens

SACRAMENTO, June 16, 2021 -- Mosquito experts say that as the state reopens and Californians make summer travel plans, it's important to pack - and use - insect repellent to protect themselves from mosquito bites and the diseases they can spread. The reminder about wearing insect repellent is part of [National Mosquito Control Awareness Week](#), which is celebrated June 20-26 throughout the country.

Wearing insect repellent is an important way to prevent the spread of West Nile virus, the most widespread and serious mosquito-borne disease in California. According to the [California Department of Public Health](#) (CDPH), West Nile virus, which is transmitted by *Culex* mosquitoes, was first detected in the eastern U.S. in 1999 and has since expanded across the country. There is no human vaccine for West Nile virus, which can cause debilitating cases of meningitis, encephalitis, and even death.

“Mosquito-transmitted diseases pose a real public health threat,” said Assemblymember Bill Quirk (D-Hayward). “That’s why I’ve been advocating for increased state funding to ensure mosquito and public health experts have the tools and resources they need to protect Californians from debilitating and deadly diseases. I also encourage all Californians to take personal precautions to make sure they are protected.”

It is also important for Californians to protect against invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes. These mosquitoes are not native to California, but they are now found in over 300 cities throughout the state. They are capable of transmitting the viruses that cause Zika, dengue, and chikungunya. Fortunately, these viruses are not currently present in California, but travelers to other countries who become infected could introduce the virus locally upon their return. Mosquito experts warn that as global travel increases, there is an increased risk for local transmission of these diseases.

“For many Californians, summertime means family vacations and time spent outside,” said Truc Dever, president of the [Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California](#). “It’s also the height of mosquito season, so it’s important to apply insect repellent after putting on sunscreen when you are headed outside, as well as make sure there is no standing water around your home and property where mosquitoes can lay eggs.”

Invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes often live in people’s front yards, backyards, and patios—areas where mosquito and vector control agencies can’t easily inspect. *Aedes* mosquitoes are

particularly difficult to control because they prefer to lay their eggs in small water-filled containers like jars, saucers, old tires, and yard drains. Unlike most mosquitoes, the eggs can survive for over a year even if completely dry, and hatch when the container refills with water. Due to the difficult nature of controlling invasive *Aedes*, mosquito experts are evaluating innovative methods, such as Sterile Insect Techniques, to protect the public from their bites and possible disease transmission.

To help prevent mosquito bites:

- Apply insect repellent containing EPA-registered active ingredients, including DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535, to clothes and exposed skin according to label instructions. Repellents keep mosquitoes from biting. It is important to follow EPA and CDC guidelines for the safe use of repellents on children.
- Install screens on windows and doors and keep them in good repair to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including in flowerpots, old tires, buckets, pet dishes, and trash cans. Mosquitoes can develop from egg to adult in about a week using very small amounts of standing water.
- Repair leaking faucets and broken sprinklers that can contribute to stagnant water around your home.
- Maintain swimming pools and jacuzzies with proper chemicals to prevent growth of algae and mosquitoes from breeding.
- Report neglected swimming pools to your local mosquito and vector control agency (agency information can be found at www.mvcac.org)

For more information, check out these videos: [Tip, Toss & Take Action](#) and [Everyone Can Help Fight the Bite!](#) For more information, please visit the [CDPH Mosquitoes and Mosquito-borne Diseases](#) webpage.

About MVCAC

The [Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California](#) (MVCAC) is the statewide voice for mosquito and vector control professionals. The association provides public health information, expertise, mosquito and vector-borne disease surveillance, innovative research, professional training, effective legislative and regulatory advocacy on behalf of California public agencies.