

# Mosquito Control Protects Public Before, During, and After Pandemic

By Scott Schermerhorn

The COVID-19 pandemic has not prevented the performance of essential mosquito control activities in Charlotte County. Despite the pandemic it is important to remember that other debilitating and potentially fatal diseases could be transmitted by mosquitoes, negatively influencing Charlotte Counties citizens' and visitor's health. Throughout the past year, closures, distancing, vaccines, and the reopening of society, Charlotte County Mosquito Control has continued the county's mission of delivering exceptional service by controlling mosquito populations and will continue that service beyond the next pandemic, hurricane, or any other natural disaster.

Fortunately, mosquitos have been shown not to carry the COVID-19 virus or its variants. But, evidence suggests that other diseases carried by some mosquitos can exacerbate serious symptoms associated with an existing COVID-19 infection. Diseases such a West Nile, Dengue Fever, Chikungunya, and several types of Encephalitis can stress the ability to breath, cough, and or place additional burdens on suppressed or already weakened immune systems. The protection of human health and the prevention of mosquito-borne disease potentially leading to concurrent infections continues to be a main priority of Charlotte County Mosquito Control.

Mosquitoes are more than just a nuisance. Each year The American Mosquito Control Association declares the week of June 21-26 as National Mosquito Control Awareness Week to educate and bring awareness to the significance of mosquito control programs and the front-line men and women professionals who get the job done. The mosquito has been cited as the most dangerous animal in the world and in Florida's wet rainy season mosquito control becomes even more critical. Charlotte County Mosquito Control employees are striving to control the variety of species of mosquitos found in the county and prevent their spread throughout our public health landscape by safe, effective, sustained mosquito control techniques, and the promotion of mosquito awareness in the community.

While organized mosquito control activities are vital to reducing human-mosquito contact, the public can also make substantial contributions to their own safety by following the 3 Ds:

- Drain standing water
- Dress in suitable protective attire
- Defend by wearing insect repellent in areas with high mosquito activity and avoiding these areas at times of very high activity.

The Division of Charlotte County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control is committed to always protecting and improving public health by providing effective mosquito control and the prevention of diseases carried by mosquitos. Charlotte County Mosquito Control employs an integrated pest management approach consistent with applicable laws and justified by principles of public health, vector control, environmental safety, and fiscal responsibility. For more information, visit [www.charlottecountyfl.gov](http://www.charlottecountyfl.gov).

*Scott Schermerhorn is the manager of the Charlotte County Mosquito & Aquatic Weed Control Division. Readers may reach him at [Scott.Schermerhorn@CharlotteCountyFL.gov](mailto:Scott.Schermerhorn@CharlotteCountyFL.gov).*