

Charlotte County update for 6/22/16

Mosquito control tells mosquitoes to ‘buzz’ off

By Scott Schermerhorn, Mosquito Control Manager

There is nothing worse than an unwanted house guest, especially when they do nothing but suck you dry. Mosquitoes have nasty habits of buzzing around, causing itchy bite marks and making many grab the nearest can of bug repellent. Enjoy the outdoors this summer and stop the spread of mosquito-borne illnesses by following tips from Charlotte County Mosquito Control and the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA).

Recently, the U.S. has seen increased cases of mosquito-borne illnesses such as the West Nile Virus, encephalitis, and other exotic diseases such as Dengue fever, Chikungunya and now Zika. As of Feb. 17, the state Department of Health has confirmed 195 cases of Zika virus in Florida, including 39 cases involving pregnant women. All of the cases are travel related, which means none have been contracted by mosquito bites in the state. No cases have been confirmed in Charlotte County.

For information about Zika virus, call the state’s information hotline at 855-622-6735 or visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Zika Virus under Hot Topics.

To ensure the safety of family, friends and pets, it’s extremely important to make sure you’re taking the proper preventative steps. First, reduce mosquito breeding through water management and source reduction. Second, reduce adult mosquito populations.

One of the easiest and most crucial things to do is to remove any stagnant water you have around your property. Deny mosquitos their breeding grounds by emptying pots, tarps, tools, and trash cans of any water that has collected. If a mosquito problem already exists, controlling adult mosquitoes through mosquito traps, space sprays and vegetation management can help. Mosquitoes can also be kept out of the home by keeping windows, doors and porches tightly screened.

Eliminating standing water is probably the most important thing to remember when preventing or controlling mosquito problems. Keep it in the back of your mind during all outdoor activities – even remember to irrigate lawns and gardens carefully to prevent water from standing for several days.

Charlotte County Mosquito Control reminds the public to practice the Three Ds of mosquito prevention: Drain, Dress and Defend:

- Drain: Empty out water containers at least once per week
- Dress: Wear long sleeves, long pants, and light-colored, loose-fitting clothing
- Defend: Properly apply an approved repellent such as DEET, Picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon-eucalyptus

Charlotte County Mosquito and Aquatic Weed Control is a division within the Department of Charlotte County Public Works. The Mosquito Control unit is committed to protecting and improving public health by providing effective mosquito control and the prevention of diseases carried by mosquitos. The unit strives to be in the forefront of mosquito control, helping to develop, test and implement new control technologies that are effective as well as considerate

of the natural Florida environment. Charlotte County Mosquito Control helps control the mosquito populations through an integrated pest management approach consistent with applicable laws and justified by principles of public health, vector control, environmental safety and fiscal responsibility. For information, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Departments, then Public Works.

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