

Fairfield Department of Health Mosquito Program

The Fairfield Department of Health has been conducting mosquito surveillance and control activities in Fairfield County under the Ohio EPA's Mosquito Control Grant during the summer of 2017. Mosquito surveillance activities include mosquito trapping, treating standing water with larvicide, working with property owners to drain breeding sites if possible, and responding to mosquito/standing water complaints and solid waste complaints. The mosquitoes that are trapped during surveillance are shipped to Ohio Department of Health to be identified and tested for West Nile Virus. So far, over 200 mosquitoes have been trapped for identification and testing. One mosquito sample tested positive for West Nile Virus near the Johnson Covered Bridge Park in Madison Township. The Fairfield Department of Health will conduct further surveillance in the area which will include additional trapping and mosquito control including investigating the area to help eliminate potential breeding sites and harborage sites of mosquitoes.

West Nile Virus typically occurs in the summer months between June and September and can be spread to humans through a bite from an infected mosquito. Most people (70-80%) who become infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms, and about 1 in 5 people who become infected will develop fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Less than 1% of people who are infected will develop a serious neurologic illness such as encephalitis or meningitis (inflammation of the brain or surrounding tissues).

Each summer, mosquitoes can be found around our homes, neighborhoods, parks and campgrounds. Most are merely a nuisance and are not major vectors of diseases. In fact, only a few of the 59 species of mosquitoes in Ohio can transmit disease. Although rare, mosquitoes can carry disease such as West Nile Virus, encephalitis and malaria in humans, and heartworm in dogs. Therefore, it is always advisable to take preventive measures to protect yourself and your family against mosquito bites.

How to Protect Yourself:

When outdoors, wear long sleeves, pants, and socks to provide a protective layer against mosquito bites. Repel mosquitoes during mosquito season by using repellents that contain an EPA-registered active ingredient such as DEET or picaridin. Take extra precaution when being outdoors during peak mosquito hours (dawn and dusk).

How to Protect Your Home and Prevent Mosquito Breeding

Keep windows and door screens closed and in good repair. Mosquitoes like to rest in tall weeds. Keep weeds cut short to help deter mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can breed in anything that can hold water for more than a week such as cans, flower pots, buckets and tires. Containers such as bird baths should be emptied once a week to keep mosquitoes from breeding. Keep house gutters clean, clean ditches so they will flow, and try to reduce low areas on your property that hold water.