

# Take steps to prevent West Nile virus infection

“The discovery of West Nile in Orange County’s mosquito population is a reminder that the West Nile virus is still present and is a serious health risk,” said Orange County Health Commissioner, Jean M. Hudson, M.D., M.P.H.

Residents should wear appropriate clothing and consider sprays when spending time outdoors. They should also check their property for any pooling or stagnant water.

The Health Commissioner offers the following prevention tips:

- Minimize outdoor activities between dusk and dawn.
- Wear shoes and socks, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt when you are outdoors for long periods of time, or when mosquitoes are most active.
- Consider using mosquito repellent when it is necessary to be outdoors, particularly during evening activities, e.g., fishing. Make sure to follow the directions on the label.

Mosquitoes can breed in any stagnant water that lasts more than four days. To reduce or eliminate standing water that attracts mosquitoes around your home and property, take the following precautions:

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Drill drain holes in the bottoms of recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Make sure that roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Turn over wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in birdbaths twice a week.
- Remove all discarded tires from your property.
- Clean vegetation and debris from the edges of ponds.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens are beautiful, but become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate.

For more information on mosquito prevention or protection, call the Orange County Department of Health at 291-2332.