



NEWS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
COURT HOUSE, NORRISTOWN, PA., BOX 311, 19404-0311

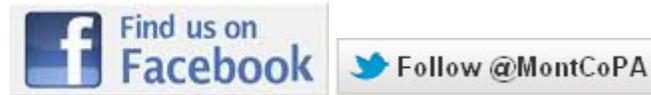
Frank X. Custer, Communications Director

Jessica Willingham, Communications Assistant

PHONE (610) 278-3061 FAX (610) 278-5943

COMMISSIONERS: JOSH SHAPIRO, *Chair*

LESLIE S. RICHARDS, *Vice Chair*, BRUCE L. CASTOR, JR., *Commissioner*



RELEASE: June 12, 2014

Tips to Prevent Mosquito-Borne Illness

Norristown, PA (June 12, 2014) – West Nile Virus (WNV) is now considered endemic in Pennsylvania and another emerging mosquito-borne illness called Chikungunya is now in the Americas and entering the continental United States. Since it only takes one positive mosquito biting one unlucky individual to lead to an illness, the threat of contracting a mosquito borne disease should be taken seriously.

There are simple steps everyone can take to minimize mosquitoes and protect public health.

- Wear light colored, loose fitting clothing. Mosquitoes are attracted to darker colors, especially blue.
- Use insect repellent. Follow the label for application. Consult a doctor with questions or concerns.
- Mosquitoes need stagnant water for their eggs to develop, so dump out bird baths, kiddie pools, and anything else that holds water every three days. Mosquitoes can go through their life cycle in as little as five days when conditions are optimal. Eliminating standing water stops mosquitoes dead in their tracks.
- Drill several holes in the bottom of recycling containers so water can drain from them. Trash containers should be covered so no rain can accumulate in them.
- Aerate ornamental ponds or stock them with fish.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas, and hot tubs. Keep them empty and covered if not in use; drain water that collects in pool covers. A swimming pool left unmaintained for even a week can breed thousands of mosquitoes.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly and rooftops are free of standing water. Clogged gutters will breed mosquitoes.
- For areas that cannot be managed with the above methods, there's always larvicide. Many of the big box stores, home improvement centers, landscaping outlets, and even some pet stores

carry consumer products that can be safely used to kill mosquito larvae. Again, read and apply according to the label.

- Educate your neighbors. If you notice that they may have some stagnant water on their property, respectfully discuss it with them. They may be unaware of the mosquito hatchery in their own back yard.
- If all else fails, contact the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) and register a complaint. Property owners are responsible for maintaining their property in a condition that does not breed mosquitoes. The same is true for publically owned property, so don't forget about parks, schools, and ball fields. Please visit www.montcopa.org/health to find the office nearest to you or to learn about the many services the MCHD provides.

The MCHD will be on the front lines protecting the residents of the County from WNV and other mosquito-borne illnesses. Traps will be set, mosquitoes will be tested, and complaints will be addressed. The MCHD will be applying larvicides to publically-owned mosquito breeding areas and performing adult treatments in areas where WNV-positive mosquito populations need to be controlled. Keeping the residents of Montgomery County safe from WNV is MCHD's goal. County residents can help make this initiative a success.