



Prevent Mosquito Breeding on Private Property

Due to the presence of West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in mosquito populations in Massachusetts, the Framingham Public Health Department and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health highly advise homeowners to eliminate all sources of standing water on their property to prevent a breeding environment for mosquitoes. **It is not unusual to see hundreds of mosquito larvae in as little as two cups (one pint) of water.** Once mosquito larvae mature and emerge from the water, their likely targets will be the owners of the yard and their neighbors.

To prevent a yard from becoming a source for mosquitoes, homeowners should thoroughly inspect their property and remove or modify water-holding containers that may breed mosquitoes. The following are some examples and solutions:



- Tires should either be disposed of or stored inside a garage or cellar.
- Potential water holding containers such as rubbish barrels, buckets, wheelbarrows and small boats should be covered or stored upside down.
- The water in wading pools and birdbaths should be changed at least once a week.
- Infrequently used pools should be tightly covered or chlorinated.
- Barrels used by gardeners to collect rainwater should be emptied once a week.
- Ornamental ponds should be stocked with small fish or treated with Bti (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) as needed.
- Repair damaged window and screen doors.

Abandoned or unkempt swimming pools can quickly become significant larval mosquito habitat. **Bti** is a type of bacteria that is an effective and relatively non-toxic mosquito larvicide. Bti is available to homeowners under the product name, "Mosquito Dunks" and can be purchased at local hardware and garden supply stores.

Although Bti is an effective treatment, it only a **temporary** solution. **Eliminating potential sources of standing water, such as filling in pools no longer in use, should be considered in order to prevent mosquito breeding and harborage in the future.**

If you need **assistance in treating standing water or have any questions about mosquitoes** please contact **Brian Farless**, of the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Project at **(781) 899-5730**. For more information on mosquitoes, visit: <https://www.mass.gov/mosquito-borne-diseases> or call the Framingham Public Health Department at 508-532-5470.

