

Mosquito Prevention: Drain and Cover

Sarasota County Public Safety, in partnership with the Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County, reminds everyone to drain any standing water in and around homes and businesses as an important first step in preventing mosquito-borne illnesses from spreading throughout a community.

The “Drain and Cover” campaign reminds us that some mosquitoes require only the tiniest amount of water that it takes to fill a bottle cap to produce more and more mosquitoes.

As mosquito populations decrease, so do the chances that any mosquito-borne illness that enters a community will spread.

With the recent passing of Hurricane Ian, there are plenty of areas in, around and atop homes and businesses where standing water should be drained.

DRAIN standing water:

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots, or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots, pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that stretch tight or with folds that can be smoothed over to prevent from collecting water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin with:

- **CLOTHING** - If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves.
- **REPELLENT** - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with 10-30 percent DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens:

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites

- Clean out troughs and gutters;

- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain;
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots;
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups;
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water;
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week;
- Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week; and
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

Source: <https://www.scgov.net/government/emergency-services/hurricane-recovery>