Standing Water

CAUTION

If mosquito larvae have reached the pupal stage of growth (just prior to adult emergence), they are immune to larvicides. A dunk placed in a puddle containing pupae will have no effect. However, a dunk can remain active for up to 20 days, which may be long enough for it to kill the next generation of larvae.

Residents can purchase and use larvicide products labeled for consumer use on their own property. They may not legally apply larvicides on any properties other than their own, unless they are licensed (certified-Category 8) pesticide applicators and have permission from the property owner.

Residents with questions about eliminating or treating standing water may call the Henrico West Nile virus hotline at:

226-NILE (6453)

Henrico County, Virginia

How Henrico residents can treat or eliminate standing water and prevent mosquito breeding.

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REDUCING THE RISK

Henrico County's goal is to arm residents with information to help combat the spread of West Nile virus. The county's new standing water policy is part of an ongoing effort to maintain the health and safety of residents by reducing the risk of exposure to West Nile virus, encephalitis and other potentially serious mosquito-borne diseases. The Department of Public Works encourages property owners to eliminate or treat standing water on their property. Through education and outreach, Henrico will work closely with residents to answer questions and provide information. Residents can call the county's West Nile virus line at 226-NILE for more information.

WHAT IS THE COUNTY DOING?

- Adding five new full-time staff members–including two inspectors and a supervisor–to implement the standing water policy.
- Visiting problem sites, speaking to residents and property owners and providing standing water treatment and elimination information.
- Providing speakers for interested groups, clubs and organizations.

STANDING WATER: WHAT IS IT?

An outdoor accumulation of stagnant water that can breed mosquitoes. Standing water **does not include**:

- tidal and nontidal wetlands,
- water that has been still for less than six days,
- moving water, such as fountains, and
- water containing natural predators, like fish.

Both large and small collections of water–ranging from a child's wading pool to an upturned garbage can lid or a clogged gutter–can meet the definition of standing water. Mosquitoes need only a small amount of stagnant water to reproduce.

TREAT STANDING WATER

Timing is key; mosquito larvae can develop and hatch in just six days.

- Dump or drain containers or tarps.
- Drain water in puddles and ditches by digging or improving a drainage channel, or fill the hole with gravel or soil so water is absorbed or flows elsewhere.
- Treat water with larvicide.

Larvicides are available at a number of area farm, hardware, home improvement or general merchandise stores. Consumer product larvicides come in two forms: dunks (donut-shaped briquettes) and granules. Dunks are better suited for use in large areas. A single dunk can treat 100 square feet of water area, and the active ingredient can release continuously for up to 20 days. Treat smaller areas of water by breaking a dunk and using appropriately sized chunks depending on the size of the container. Granular larvicide is more economical when treating a small amount of water. Be sure to read and follow the label instructions carefully.