

CAPE MAY COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF MOSQUITO CONTROL  
609-465-9038

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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**Q: WHAT IS THE LIFE CYCLE OF A MOSQUITO?**

A: Despite all of the different species and various mosquito habitats in Cape May County; mosquitoes have at least one thing in common: all species require water to complete their life cycle. Mosquitoes have four different developmental stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Depending on the species, female mosquitoes lay their eggs either on the water's surface, edges of emergent vegetation or in damp soil depressions that may become inundated by rain or tide. The eggs hatch into the aquatic life stage known as "larvae" (plural). Larvae grow by feeding on organic matter in the water and going through four growth stages called "instars". After the fourth instar, larvae molt into "pupae" (plural).

In the pupal stage, the larvae undergo a complete transformation into the flying adult that we are most familiar with. Shortly after emerging the female mosquitoes fly off to seek a "bloodmeal". The mosquito doesn't gain nutrition from the blood, but instead uses the proteins found in it to develop eggs. Once egg-laying is complete, the female mosquito must seek another bloodmeal in order to lay further batches of eggs.

**Q: WHAT MOSQUITO SPECIES ARE FOUND IN CAPE MAY COUNTY**

A: In Cape May County, we have identified 45 different mosquito species. These are found in a wide variety of habitats including roadside ditches, flooded woodlands, freshwater swamps, storm water basins, artificial containers (i.e. tires), and coastal salt marshes. Species that use salt marshes constitute, by far, the majority of pest problems throughout the county. These mosquitoes can fly over 20 miles and so are found throughout Cape May County.

**Q: WHAT HUMAN AND ANIMAL DISEASES DO MOSQUITOS TRANSMIT?**

A: It is through biting and bloodfeeding that a mosquito can act as a vector, or transmitter of diseases between humans and animals. Depending on the species, mosquitoes can transmit diseases like malaria, yellow fever, dog heartworm and encephalitis, such as eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile virus (WNV). West Nile virus was first detected in the United States in the New York metropolitan area in 1999. Fortunately, WNV activity in Cape May County has been minimal, although the virus is detected every year in birds, horses and sometimes humans. Historically, EEE has been the major health concern transmitted by mosquitoes. In previous years, EEE outbreaks have caused sickness and even fatalities in our area, but these are rare. Other mosquito transmitted diseases such as Dengue, Chikungunya, and Zika have only appeared in NJ from individuals that have come from places where these viruses are endemic. So far there has been no local transmission of these viruses although our department does monitor for them just in case.

**Q: WHAT CAN THE HOMEOWNER DO?**

A: Mosquito control begins at home. If standing water around your home can be eliminated, mosquitoes will have no place to lay their eggs. Anything that can hold water has the potential to support mosquito larvae. Keeping adult mosquitoes out of our house is an additional step. Make sure all window and door screens are free of holes and closed securely. A wide variety of repellents exists for relief from adult mosquitoes and other biting insects

and can be purchased in many retail establishments. Repellents are generally effective, but should be used with caution in accordance with label directions. Please read the label completely before application.

**Q: WHAT CAN I DO IF THERE IS AN ADULT MOSQUITO PROBLEM OR THERE IS POSSIBLE LARVAL HABITAT AROUND MY HOUSE?**

**A:** Contact the Department of Mosquito Control at (609)465-9038. Our staff will investigate your situation promptly. If an on-site inspection is deemed necessary, a service request form will be filled out and handled as soon as possible.

**Q: WHERE DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?**

**A:** Visit our website: [www.capemaycountynj/481/mosquito-control](http://www.capemaycountynj/481/mosquito-control) . There you will find more information on our program and numerous links to information about mosquitoes. You will also find updates on any adult mosquito control applications if they are needed.

For more information on the pesticides used for larval and adult mosquito control, please refer to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection approved pesticide fact sheets. Only state licensed pesticide applicators or operators perform pesticide application in Cape May County. All pesticides applied by the Cape May County Department of Mosquito Control are registered with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and can therefore be legally applied in New Jersey.

Please feel free to contact the Cape May County Department of Mosquito Control directly with any questions or concerns. Our hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7:00am- 3:00pm.