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MOSQUITO BREEDING SITES / HABITAT SOURCE REDUCTION

The rainy season has brought much precipitation upon our island; as a result, there are many homes that have items or areas that contain standing water which serve as ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes. Mosquito larvae only need a fraction of an inch of standing water to survive. Although Guam is free of endemic mosquito-borne diseases, such as Dengue Fever, malaria, and the Zika virus, our neighboring islands and countries are not so fortunate. As a result, we all must be diligent in preventing the introduction and spread of these diseases. Guam is home to mosquitoes that are capable of transmitting these dreaded diseases; thus, the Department is encouraging the public to do their part by breaking the life-cycle of a mosquito at the home.

Residents can do their part to reduce the mosquito population with some simple steps:

- Empty water from flower pots, garbage cans, recycling containers, wheelbarrows, aluminum cans, boat tarps, old tires and buckets; any item that can hold water.
- Flush birdbaths and wading pools weekly.
- Flush ornamental bromeliads or treat with a biological larvicide available at home stores.
- Clean roof gutters, which can become clogged and hold water.
- Change the water in outdoor pet dishes regularly.
- Keep pools and spas chlorinated and filtered.
- Stock ornamental ponds with mosquito-eating fish.
- Cover rain barrels with screens.
- Check for standing water under houses, near plumbing drains, under air conditioner drip areas, and around septic tanks and water pumps.
- Take steps to eliminate standing water, improve drainage, and prevent future puddling.

Mosquito bites can irritate skin and potentially spread disease. These simple preventative measures can help reduce the number of mosquitoes in Guam and minimize mosquito-borne diseases.

It's important for residents to remember the four D's of mosquito prevention:

1. Drain: Empty out water containers and scrub the sides to remove mosquito eggs at least once every 5 days.
2. Dress: Wear long sleeves, long pants, and light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
3. Defend: Properly apply an approved mosquito repellent such as DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, or Oil of Lemon-Eucalyptus.
4. Dusk/Dawn: These are the hours that mosquitoes are active. Avoid being outdoors unprotected during these times.

Please remember that the first-line, and the best defense, against mosquitoes is you and the actions you take in and around your home or business! Standing water is the culprit – eliminate any source of standing water. Work with your neighbors or adjoining property owners to eliminate standing water sources used by mosquitoes to breed.

For further information, please contact the Mosquito Surveillance and Control Program of the Division of Environmental Health at 735-7221.



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