

Mosquito Control Tips for Small Communities

It may be difficult and costly for smaller communities to maintain a comprehensive mosquito control program in town or in a three-kilometre treatment area adjacent to the community. There are, however, some effective treatment options available that can reduce mosquito numbers in and near where people live.

1. Not all sites with standing water produce mosquitoes. It is important to identify the sites that have larvae in them in most years, particularly those that are close to town. Pay special attention to shallow, sunlit water that collects along roadside ditches, railway and power transmission rights-of-way. These areas can be treated with *B.t.i.* or can be regularly maintained to improve drainage.
2. In dry years, stagnant water lying in culverts in roads can produce significant numbers of *Culex* mosquitoes. These sites should be checked regularly for larvae and treated with *B.t.i.* if necessary. Blocked or poorly draining culverts should be cleaned periodically.
3. Small amounts of water that are allowed to stand for a week may produce mosquitoes. Have clean-up days around your community to encourage residents to clear yards of debris and clean and empty eaves troughs, tires, pool covers and other items that collect water.
4. Advise residents to cover rain barrels with tight lids or screens and tightly seal around the downspouts, install aeration pumps on ornamental ponds and water gardens and empty and clean birdbaths weekly.
5. Mosquitoes will readily enter a building so encourage residents to check screens on windows and doors, gazebos or decks. Screens are an effective barrier, but only if they are properly maintained. They should be checked for holes or tears and should fit snugly into their frames. Screen doors should always open toward the outdoors.
6. Have copies of all WNV factsheets and other information on hand at the municipal office. Some municipalities also provide small shaker cans of *B.t.i.* (i.e. Aquabac®) at cost to their ratepayers. These are available at most hardware or building supply stores and can be used by residents on their own property.