



# THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



COMMISSIONERS  
Terence Farrell  
Kathi Cozzone  
Michelle Kichline

JEANNE E. CASNER, MPH, PMP  
County Health Director

CHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
Chester County Government Services Center  
601 Westtown Road, Suite 290  
West Chester, PA 19380-0990  
610-344-6225 FAX: 610-344-6727  
[www.chesco.org/health](http://www.chesco.org/health)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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For more information call 610-344-6490

## **Chester County Health Department offers advice on prevention of mosquito-borne diseases**

*Make you and your home a bite-free zone*

**West Chester, PA** – Now that the weather is warming up, the Chester County Health Department encourages county residents to “Make you and your home a bite-free zone”, reducing the risk of mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile virus and Zika virus. Because mosquito-borne diseases are spread through the bite of an infected mosquito, residents can reduce their risk by using insect repellent and other personal protection and getting rid of standing water on their property.

The Health Department advises:

- Stay indoors at dawn and dusk during warmer months. Most types of mosquitoes bite most frequently during these times, although some types of mosquitoes bite most frequently during the daytime.
- Dress in long sleeves, long pants, and socks. Choose clothing that is light colored and made of tightly woven material.
- Use insect repellents containing active ingredients registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for use on skin and clothing.
  - Products containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide longer-lasting protection.
  - Follow manufacturer instructions when applying repellent.
- Wear permethrin-treated clothing or spray your clothing with permethrin, which repels mosquitoes and lasts through 70-100 washings.

*“Protecting You and Your Environment”*

Jeanne Casner, Director of the Chester County Health Department noted: “Mosquitoes lay eggs in standing water – water that does not flow. Getting rid of standing water on your property can help decrease the mosquito population, your risk of getting a mosquito-borne disease, and may also help decrease the need for mosquito control sprays in your neighborhood.”

The Health Department also encourages the public to:

- Cover or empty containers such as trash cans, wading pools, wheelbarrows, and pots.
- Turn containers upside down when not in use so they don't collect water.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers.
- Get rid of old tires.
- Change the water in bird baths every three to five days.
- Check storm drains, window wells, and underneath leaky faucets for standing water.
- Clean roof gutters every year.
- Aerate and/or stock ornamental ponds with fish.
- Keep swimming pools clean and chlorinated. Make sure that water does not gather on swimming pool covers.
- Treat a pool of standing water that cannot be drained with Bti products. Bti is a naturally-occurring bacterial product that kills mosquito larvae and is safe for people, pets, aquatic life, and plants. You can find these products at local lawn and garden supply stores.
- Make sure that window and door screens fit tightly to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- Run electric fans nearby when spending time outdoors. Mosquitoes have trouble flying in strong winds.
- Replace outdoor lights with yellow "bug" lights, which tend to attract fewer mosquitoes than ordinary lights.

For more information on preventing mosquito-borne diseases, visit [www.chesco.org/mosquitoes](http://www.chesco.org/mosquitoes) or call 610-344-6490. Chester County residents can be notified about future mosquito control sprays through the following outlets:

- [Chester County Website](#)
- [Sign up for the Health Department mailing list](#)

- [Health Department Facebook](#)
- [Health Department Twitter](#)

*The Chester County Health Department is a member of the Environmental Protection Agency's Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program. This program requires participants to affirm that environmental stewardship is an integral part of their integrated pest management (IPM) practice, use current, comprehensive information regarding the life cycle of mosquitoes within their IPM program, educate the community on the benefits of IPM, and demonstrate a commitment to pesticide risk reduction activities.*

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