

FIGHT THE BITE!

GRAND FORKS MOSQUITO CONTROL



CONTROLLING MOSQUITOES IN URBAN & RURAL AREAS

Taking the time to learn a little bit about mosquitoes can make for an enjoyable summer. Communities that have comprehensive mosquito control programs benefit substantially by reducing the mosquito population and the risk of West Nile virus. Mosquito control is very expensive. Most small communities can't afford a comprehensive mosquito program. So, trying to achieve successful mosquito control on a single farmyard or rural home is almost impossible. The cost per household would be too expensive for most. However, by taking a few simple steps, you may be able to reclaim your back yard. **Here are four simple steps that will help reduce the mosquito population on your property in both rural and urban areas:**

#1: Eliminate Breeding Habitat



Mosquitoes can reproduce anyplace that water collects and remains for as little as one week. By eliminating standing water on your property, you can prevent mosquitoes from reproducing. Inspect your property weekly for any signs of standing water or water holding containers. If you have a rain barrel used for collecting rainwater, make sure it is completely sealed to prevent mosquitoes from gaining access to the water. If you have a low spot in your yard where water accumulates and remains for several days after a rain, fill it in or consider planting a water tolerant tree or shrub to soak up the water. Develop a property checklist and get your children or grandchildren involved with weekly inspections. Assign the responsibility to the kids. They'll love it! It also gives them ownership in the success of reducing the mosquito population.



#2: Make Your Property Undesirable for Mosquitoes



The first step to making your property undesirable for mosquitoes is to eliminate breeding habitat. Then, learn a little bit about the biology of the mosquitoes in your region. The majority of the mosquitoes in the Grand Forks region are night biters. However, if kicked up during the day in shaded areas, you can expect to be bitten. They generally seek out their blood meals around sunset and may stay active until midnight. Once the temperature starts rising, they head for cover. During hot sunny days, mosquitoes look for cool, shaded, moist, areas to rest. Tall grass, weeds, and shrubbery provide ideal resting places during the day. If the tall grass, weeds, and shrubs are by your backyard deck, then you've pretty much invited the mosquitoes to your evening barbecue. By keeping your grass and weeds cut short and shrubbery trimmed, you'll reduce the resting sites for mosquitoes.



#3: Protect Yourself



Wear protective clothing to cover exposed skin. Apply an effective insect repellent. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends repellents that contain DEET. There are several new repellents on the market that go on dry. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, DEET is not recommended for children under 2 months old. Always follow the label directions when applying insect repellents.



#4: Apply Barrier Treatments



Mosquito barrier treatments are products designed to repel or kill mosquitoes on contact. Many professional mosquito control programs use these products to get instant results in controlling mosquitoes in a selected area. Permethrin is a common active ingredient in these products. Barrier treatments are residual products, meaning they'll continue working for an extended amount of time (1-3 weeks). When applying these products, try to spray areas that remain shaded during the day. The shaded areas are where the mosquitoes choose to rest during the day. Treating the shaded areas may also extend the effectiveness of the product. The active ingredient in these products breaks down rapidly from Ultra Violet sunlight. These products can usually be purchased from local retail stores and can be applied by the homeowner. Always read and follow the label directions when working with any chemicals.



If you have any questions or concerns relating to mosquito control visit our website at www.gfmosquito.com or contact the Grand Forks Public Health Department at 701-787-8110