

Mosquitoes are an all too familiar summer nuisance. They are not only annoying, but they present potential health hazards as transmitters of diseases such as encephalitis, malaria, West Nile virus and yellow fever in humans and heartworm to pets.

With the heavy rains and flooding in the month of June, Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department is reminding area residents of mosquito control on their properties.

There are positive steps homeowners can take to reduce the menace since many generations of mosquitoes can breed right in their own yards.

- Spray mosquitoes' roosting areas.
- Follow a regular spraying program.
- Spray where mosquitoes rest during the heat of the day—in the cool leafy shade of shrubs, bushes, vines, flowers and tall grass and weeds.
- Spray sheltered surfaces outside such as eaves, breezeways, garages and the ceilings and screens of porches.

Several biological insecticides are also available to control immature mosquitoes in aquatic habitats.

Many mosquito problems in neighborhoods are a result of water-filled containers which can easily be eliminated.

Eliminate breeding grounds by:

- Storing inside, turning over or emptying containers
- Emptying water from potted plant saucers
- Changing the water in the bird baths weekly
- Emptying watering cans and pet dishes daily
- Storing tires inside (or taking to recycling depot)
- Keeping rain gutters free of debris
- Covering boats or allowing to drain
- Maintain pool water or draining
- Repairing leaky pipes and outside faucets and moving air conditioner drain hoses.

More information on West Nile Virus may be found at www.swhealthdept.com/health.htm or call the McCook office at 308-345-4223 for a homeowners guide to mosquito control or more information and educational materials.

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties.