



Mosquito management

Why control mosquitoes?

Mosquitoes can have a serious impact on our comfort and health. They interfere with recreation and outdoor work and can transmit a variety of serious diseases. These include:

- Barmah Forest virus
- Ross River virus
- Dengue Fever
- Heartworm in dogs

Mosquitoes in Gladstone

The Gladstone Region environment includes offshore islands and large coastal areas of inter-tidal wetlands. After king tides and heavy rain, mosquitoes can breed in large numbers impacting on residents, especially around the city.

Council has a routine inspection and treatment program in place to control these outbreaks. However, the extent of breeding sites and mosquito movement (up to 50km) can limit its effectiveness.

Council's management strategy

The region's potential mosquito breeding sites, which have been mapped, are checked regularly, while CO₂/light traps are used to monitor adult mosquitoes in problem areas. Results from these traps can determine the extent and origin of the problem. If breeding is found, bio-rational larvicide products are used to stop the process.

How mosquitoes breed

Mosquitoes only breed in still or very slow-moving water. While both males and females feed on plant nectar to provide energy for flight, only the females take blood meals to provide protein for egg development. Mosquitoes develop through four distinct stages: egg, larva, pupa and adult. In summer, once the eggs hatch, the larva stage takes four to five days and the pupal stage one to two days. They complete their development in five to seven days. A single female can lay up to 200 eggs at a time.

Advice for residents

You can stop mosquitoes breeding in your own neighbourhood or backyard by:

- Inspecting your house and yard weekly and removing any stagnant water;
- Emptying pot plant bases weekly or filling the base with sand to absorb water;
- Washing out all birdbaths, fishponds and ornamental pools weekly, and where possible, stocking with suitable native fish species;
- Disposing of all tins, jars, tyres and other rubbish items around the house that may hold water;
- Screening all openings to tanks, wells or other large water containers with wire gauge no coarser than 1mm mesh. This prevents mosquitoes from laying eggs;
- Filling in any water-holding cavities in trees, hollows, depressions and holes in the yard with soil or cement;
- Keeping roof guttering in good repair and regularly removing leaves and debris so pools of water do not form, especially in depressed areas;
- Cutting back and trimming trees to prevent leaves and debris from blocking roof guttering;
- Maintaining swimming pools and ensuring they are regularly chlorinated or salted;
- Emptying children's wading pools after use and cleaning thoroughly with a cloth to remove mosquito eggs;
- Drilling holes in tyres used for swings and garden surrounds to allow water to drain from them;
- Keeping all open drains and channels free from obstructions, especially weeds, grass, and other debris;
- Regularly washing out plants that hold pools of water; and
- Overturning all boats, canoes and dinghies so they do not hold water after rain.

Insecticides/Pesticides

Use a range of insecticides from nurseries or hardware stores to control mosquitoes at home. A natural pyrethrum insecticide may have to be applied weekly because it has little residual value and breaks down rapidly in sunlight. Insecticide products can be mixed with water according to instructions and applied using a pump-up type garden sprayer. Treat areas such as:

- Shaded recesses around buildings;
- Underneath outdoor furniture;
- Shrubs and dense vegetation; and
- Underneath leafy shrubs where insects rest during the day to evade the sun.

Spraying a few hours before gardening or barbecues will help to reduce mosquito numbers. Always follow the instructions and wear the recommended protection when mixing and spraying.

Personal protection

Mosquitoes are part of our natural environment, but you can reduce the risk of being bitten by:

- Using repellents;
- Wearing loose fitting clothes outdoors (i.e. light coloured, long sleeve shirt and long pants);
- Burning mosquito coils;
- Screening windows and doors; and
- Using ceiling fans and mosquito nets.

Mosquitoes are attracted to increased humidity caused by perspiration or by activities such as washing cars and watering gardens. Try to avoid these activities early or late in the day. Mosquitoes are further attracted to carbon dioxide (in our breath) and hone in on this to source blood meals.

Legal obligations

Section 11 of the *Public Health Act 2005* refers to a public health risk as any animal, structure, substance or other thing that is, or is likely to become, a breeding ground or source of food for designated pests. Designated pests include mosquitoes. The *Public Health Regulation 2005* requires that a person must ensure that an accumulation of water or liquid at the place is not a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Fines may apply to residents breeding mosquitoes or failing to comply with directions to remove the public health risk.

Contact us

For further information about this or any other mosquito issue, please call Council's Customer Service Centre on (07) 4970 0700 or 1300 733 343.

How can you contact us?



(07) 4970 0700

STD CALLS: 1300 733 343

For those residents who currently incur STD call rates when contacting their local customer service centre



(07) 4975 8500



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