



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Health Officials Urge Californians to Remove Standing Water *Rains Can Lead to More Mosquitoes*

SACRAMENTO - California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith today called on the people of California to help reduce the number of mosquitoes by eliminating standing water, especially in areas that have recently had rain and continue to experience warm temperatures.

“Rainy weather can create new breeding grounds for mosquitoes if water is allowed to pool and remain stagnant,” said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith. “Mosquito season in California peaks in October, making it critically important that Californians take action to empty even small amounts of water from our gardens and yards.”

To help control mosquitoes, check your yard weekly for water-filled containers. Clean and scrub bird baths and pet watering dishes weekly, and dump the water from dishes under potted plants. Contact your local vector control agency if you detect unusual numbers of mosquitoes or you are being bitten during the day.

The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, an aggressive mosquito that bites during the day, has been detected in [12 California counties](#). This black-and-white striped mosquito has the potential to transmit Zika and other diseases, such as dengue fever, chikungunya and yellow fever. While the mosquito is especially active two hours after sunrise and several hours before sunset, it can also bite during the day. These mosquitoes often enter buildings through unscreened windows and doors and bite people indoors.

While there has been no local transmission of Zika in California, as of September 23, 302 travel-associated cases have been reported in the state.

Zika symptoms typically include a fever, rash, joint pain and red eyes. Most people infected with the Zika virus will not have symptoms, but Zika is a major concern in pregnant women because it can cause severe birth defects. In addition to Zika, West Nile virus, another mosquito-borne illness, continues to concern public health officials.

To prevent mosquito bites, apply repellents containing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency-registered ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535 to exposed skin and/or clothing (as directed on the product label). During the times mosquitoes are most active you should wear long- sleeve shirts, long pants, socks and shoes. Be sure window and door screens are in good condition to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.

[More information about *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes](#) can be found on the CDPH website and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [website](#).

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