



# Our Insect Enemies



## Avoiding Mosquitoes And Mosquito-Borne Disease

(NAPSA)—Controlling mosquitoes could be good for your family's health. Mosquitoes and the diseases they can transmit, like West Nile Virus, present serious public health risks. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), West Nile Virus has now been found in 43 states and Washington, D.C. and is responsible for nearly 250 deaths. West Nile Virus can lead to serious complications of the liver or nervous system, inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) or paralysis.

Mosquitoes can also transmit four types of encephalitis and malaria was detected in mosquitoes in Fairfax County, Virginia in 2002. Also, travelers introduce 100 to 200 cases of mosquito-borne dengue fever to the United States each year.

While these diseases are serious public health concerns, there are steps homeowners and business owners can take to protect their families and property. The National Pest Management Association (NPMA) recommends the following steps to help control mosquitoes:

- Eliminate mosquito breeding sites by cleaning out gutters and other areas where standing water may be present such as bird baths, ponds and non-filtered swimming pools.

- Screen windows, doors and other openings with mesh that is 18x18 strands per square inch or finer.

- Remove unneeded vegetation or trash from around any standing water sources that cannot be changed, dumped or removed.

- Use insect repellent containing N,N-diethylbenzamide (DEET) on exposed skin.

- Introduce mosquito-eating



**Buzz Off—Controlling mosquitoes can help keep your family safe.**

fish such as gambusia, green sunfish, bluegills or minnows to standing water.

- Avoid going outside during dusk or dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants, preferably treated with insect repellent, when spending time outdoors.

According to Cindy Mannes, director of public affairs for NPMA, many licensed and trained pest control professionals offer mosquito management services in addition to traditional pest control services used by homes and businesses. Many pest control professionals will provide a free inspection of a home or business to locate potential mosquito breeding sites and advise on mosquito control methods, Mannes said.

NPMA provides a national online consumer referral service for homeowners who need to locate a pest control professional in their area. To use the referral service, people can visit [www.pestworld.org/homeowners](http://www.pestworld.org/homeowners).