

There are several different species of mosquitoes, but only a few of those species are disease carriers. The rest are what we refer to as “nuisance” mosquitoes. The larvae for the disease carriers are typically found in dirty, stagnant/ standing pools of water. For those that live near the lake, since lake water is not stagnant, the disease carriers don’t typically come from the lake. But that doesn’t mean you won’t have mosquitoes. They will also breed in grassy, low lying areas near the water that stay moist for extended periods of time.

Another typical breeding area for mosquitoes is drainage ditches and low lying areas. This is where we focus most of our attention. Contrary to what people think, heavy rains can be a help in combating mosquitoes in these areas due to the fact that standing pools of water are flushed out as rains occur. The real problems develop in the warm, dry parts of the year when water left from these rains become stagnant and become breeding pools.

Many times mosquito problems develop due to homeowner’s negligence. Bird baths, buckets, containers, planters, low spots, etc. in people’s yards can be collectors of water and if left for a period of time, become mosquito breeding paradise. Even overwatering your grass can create problems.

Combating the mosquito population in any community is a daunting task. While “nuisance” mosquitoes can be irritating, we aggressively focus our efforts on the disease carriers and prevention of their population. Our chemical applicator has spent years becoming acquainted with all the problem areas in the city, and works closely with a mosquito management company that looks for larvae in pools of standing water and treats those areas with a larvicide to keep the larvae from hatching into adults. Of course, even with these preventative efforts, there are still adults flying around. If we find a problem area, we trap the adults and send them off to be tested for disease. These treatments, trapping and testing take place in several locations throughout the city. We began the trapping and testing in the spring of 2008 (including areas near the lake) and all reports have come back negative for disease. We plan to keep this program going as it has proven to be very effective.

Remember, as a rule of thumb, the stinkier and slimier the water is, the more likely the attraction for disease carrying adults to lay their eggs. Prevention is the key, so keep your property clear of standing water, and let us know if you see an area of slimy, stinky, stagnant water develop on city property so we can address it. Remind your neighbors and friends to do the same. Additionally, experts suggest wearing light colored clothing that covers exposed skin and/or wear repellent with DEET anytime you are outdoors during mosquito season.