

When you think about mosquitos, you may think about a biting nuisance. But these tiny insects are one of the deadliest animals in the world, claiming close to a million lives each year.

Of the 3000 species of mosquitoes known to exist.... 45 live right here in the Florida Keys. And half of those target humans... eating away at our quality of life ... and spreading deadly diseases such as Zika, Dengue, yellow fever and west Nile virus.

That's where we come in.

We are The Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, and our job is to protect residents and visitors from the threat that mosquitos pose to their quality of life and to their health. How do we do it?

With an integrated mosquito management approach, which takes a team of inspectors, aerial crew, researchers, and ...YOU.

Our inspectors are the front lines of our battle to curb the mosquito population from the mangrove swamps of the Keys... to residential neighborhoods... these mosquito hunters search high and low for potential breeding sites, testing suspect pools, collecting mosquitos and larvae for study and treating infested waters with larvicide.

On residential streets, our domestic inspectors go below the surface... looking for larvae in the storm drains and sewers EVERY DAY .. and.. go door-to-door searching properties for standing water that mosquitos need in order to breed.

It's here... in your own yard... where the most common disease-carrying species in the Florida Keys loves to breed. And it's here where you can do the most to control the mosquitos around you, your family and your neighbors.

Meet the *Aedes aegypti*, known for spreading the dreaded Zika virus, dengue and yellow fever. This container breeder can multiply with even the smallest pools of standing water. It just takes one container to make life miserable for you and your entire neighborhood.

But the good news?

By taking five minutes to check your property and dump any standing water once-a-week and after every rain event, you can help reduce the mosquito numbers in and around your home.

Look out for these common household items that can become breeding sites for mosquitos:

buckets, plant trivets, watering cans, AC drip buckets, yard debris, bird baths, old tires, gutters and toys left in the yard, pet bowls, untreated or abandoned spas and Jacuzzis, covers for spas or boats and yard equipment, and trash cans and trash can lids.

Here's a tip: keep your trash cans closed or drill a hole in the bottom to allow water to drain out.

Our inspectors look for these and other culprits. They also check for larvae, hand apply long-term larvicides, spray to kill adult mosquitos when needed, and even bring in a powerful weapon in combating mosquitos... the mosquito fish! Indigenous to the Florida Keys, mosquito fish eat three times their body weight of mosquito larvae per day!

If you have a mosquito problem, you can make a Service request via phone, through our website or through our smartphone app.

There's more to what we do than you see in your neighborhood.

Our field inspectors scour the mangrove swamps every day, treating larvae infested waters... setting traps like this... and documenting breeding sites.

Farther out, our offshore inspectors travel by boat to uninhabited islands and trudge through the swamps to inspect, treat and set traps... There are 60 active traps in the Keys. These adult specimens will be counted and identified in our laboratories.

When an area is too big to treat by hand... our aerial department joins the action. Within an hour of receiving an alert about a large larval location, our helicopter is in the air... distributing granular larvicide throughout mangrove swamps, tidal pools and rain-filled lots or releasing liquid larvicide mist over populated areas such as Key West. This mist can get into mosquito-breeding hotspots like gutters and buckets.

The larvicides we use are eco-friendly slow-release solutions that only target mosquitoes and black flies. This bacterial larvicide released by chopper, called BTI is non-toxic to humans and wildlife but kills mosquito larvae before they become flying biting adults.

Of course, the inspectors can't be everywhere at once, and adult mosquitoes WILL emerge and go looking for blood. That's why our arsenal includes spray trucks and aircraft that release adulticide to kill them where they fly.

Spraying, trapping and inspecting aren't all we do at the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District.

We invest in research so we always stay steps ahead of these blood suckers with cutting edge approaches. We test out new technology, new traps, new spray methods and other innovations such as the release of male mosquitoes to help lower our mosquito populations. And we test to determine if mosquitos are developing resistance to the chemicals that we use.

Between our inspectors, our aerial department and our research team, the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District covers thousands of acres and eliminates most of the mosquitos ... but we can't do it alone. We depend on YOU to keep container-breeding mosquitos from hatching in your yard.

Remember we're counting on you to take that walk around your home, especially after it rains, to look for and remove any standing water that mosquito eggs need to develop into larvae.

And if you think doing THIS won't make much of a difference... consider THIS not-so-fun fact: One female mosquito can produce over 90,000 biting female offspring in less than 2 months! That's right... 90,000! So just think of the impact you have when you prevent one mosquito from breeding on your property.

From the front lines... on land, on water, in the air and in the lab... we at the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District are working to protect you from disease and nuisance, and we thank you in advance for your efforts to control container-breeding mosquitoes. Remember, if you DO have a mosquito problem in your neighborhood, please call, or reach out through our website or our smartphone app. We'll send an inspector to locate and treat the source of the problem.