In addition to being annoying, mosquitoes can provide a serious health risk to humans and animals by transmitting diseases like West Nile virus and equine encephalitis. All mosquitoes need water to complete their life cycle, and water that stands for three days or more can provide a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Eliminating standing water reduces breeding opportunities.

Natural predators also help control mosquitoes. Various aquatic insects, salamander larvae, and fish feed on mosquito larvae, while dragonflies, purple martins, swallows, bats, and mosquitofish are all predators of adult mosquitoes.

The City of Bristol, Tennessee promotes the use of natural methods for mosquito control. While larvicides kill mosquito larvae, they also kill other aquatic insect larvae that are beneficial to the environment. The City recommends limiting the use of larvicides to standing water that does not drain to stream.

**CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information about mosquito control and the diseases transmitted by mosquitoes is available from the following agencies and organizations.

- Tennessee Department of Health [tn.gov/health/cedep/environmental/healthy-homes/hh/mosquitoes](tn.gov/health/cedep/environmental/healthy-homes/hh/mosquitoes)
- American Mosquito Control Association [mosquito.org](mosquito.org)
- The Tennessee Mosquito and Vector Control Association [tennmosquito.com](tennmosquito.com)
- Environmental Protection Agency [epa.gov/mosquitocontrol](epa.gov/mosquitocontrol)
- National Pesticide Information Center [npic.orst.edu](npic.orst.edu)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [cdc.gov/westnile](cdc.gov/westnile)
**Stormwater Facilities and Mosquitoes**

Stormwater ponds detain and slow the rate of runoff from developed areas and remove pollutants that are collected in the runoff. These ponds reduce flooding, erosion and pollution.

Stormwater ponds are also designed with mosquito control in mind. Some ponds are designed to drain in a few days, and thus do not allow enough time for mosquitoes to breed. Other ponds have deep pool areas that provide habitat for predators that feed on mosquitoes. The City periodically inspects stormwater ponds to ensure they are properly maintained.

Rain gardens and bioretention facilities are also designed to drain in less than three days. When they become clogged by sediment, these facilities need to be maintained to restore proper operation.

Catch basins that drain water from the streets may hold standing water when clogged or failing. Preventing leaves, yard waste, trash, and other debris from entering storm drains also helps prevent mosquitoes.

**PREVENTING MOSQUITOES AT HOME**

**REMOVE THEIR HABITAT**

- Eliminate standing water in old tires, buckets, plastic covers, toys, and other containers.
- Clean out gutters. When clogged by leaves, gutters can hold water for days.
- Clean out street gutters and ditches to keep rainwater flowing freely. Debris such as yard waste and trash trap water, giving mosquitoes places to breed.
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets.
- Ensure air conditioners are draining properly and not causing pooled water.
- Empty and change the water in bird baths, fountains, wading pools, and potted plant trays at least once a week.
- Regularly inspect the screens on your rain barrels to make sure they are secure.
- If your yard contains temporary pools that hold water for more than three days, drain or fill the pools with dirt.
- Keep swimming pool water treated and circulating.

**PREVENT YOUR EXPOSURE**

- Use mosquito repellants when necessary. Be sure to follow label directions and precautions closely.
- Use head nets and wear long sleeves and long pants if you venture into areas with high mosquito populations.
- Make sure window and door screens are “bug tight.”

Under normal circumstances, mosquitoes cannot breed in flowing water. Therefore, streams and rivers only produce mosquitoes when they dry up and leave shallow, stagnant puddles. Streams and rivers provide good habitat for predators that feed on mosquitoes.