

# INVASIVE MOSQUITOES

## What mosquitoes are invasive?

Certain *Aedes* mosquitoes are not native to Washington, and when introduced, may spread rapidly. Two species of concern, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, are known carriers of Zika, dengue, chikungunya, and yellow fever viruses in the United States. Though these mosquitoes are not yet present in our state, other newly introduced invasive *Aedes* species have begun to spread here.

## How can they get here?

Invasive *Aedes* mosquitoes lay eggs in natural locations, such as tree holes and plants axils and artificial containers with water. Commercial shipping of water-holding containers and plants, both international and within the country, can transport mosquitoes into new areas. Past findings of *Aedes albopictus* determined that mosquito larvae arrived in Washington via cargo containers of imported used tires and lucky bamboo plants.

## Where would I find them?

Check water-holding containers and plants, particularly those recently imported, for mosquitoes in their immature life stages—eggs, larvae, and pupae. They prefer containers with water containing organic matter, such as decaying leaves or algae. Adult mosquitoes bite people and animals, so they tend to stay close to homes or in neighboring woods.

## What can I do to help?

Take steps to control mosquitoes inside and outside of your home. Be on the watch for invasive *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. Report a sighting to the Washington State Department of Health, Zoonotic Disease Program at 360-236-3385 or [zd@doh.wa.gov](mailto:zd@doh.wa.gov).

## MOSQUITO CONTROL

- ▶ Check your yard for containers that collect water. Throw away or recycle containers that are not needed.
- ▶ Cover or turn over empty containers and large objects—buckets, barrels, wheelbarrows, boats, and old appliances that must be stored. Or place under a roof to keep them from filling with water.
- ▶ Clean and scrub bird baths and pet-watering dishes weekly.
- ▶ Dump water from overflowing dishes under potted plants and flower pots.
- ▶ Clean leave-clogged gutters and cover rain barrels with mosquito screens.
- ▶ Clean debris from ornamental ponds and keep fountains running.
- ▶ Repair leaky outdoor faucets and sprinklers.
- ▶ Fill or drain areas in your yard where water can pool.

## How to prevent disease spread by mosquitoes?

Mosquitoes, native or invasive, can carry disease. The best way to protect yourself and family is to avoid mosquito bites.

- ▶ Wear long sleeves, long pants, and light-colored, loose-fitting clothing when mosquitoes are most active.
- ▶ Properly apply an EPA-registered repellent with the active ingredient, DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon-eucalyptus, or 2-undecanone.
- ▶ Repair or replace window and door screens to keep out mosquitoes.

For more tips, visit our Mosquitoes webpage, [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov) and search “mosquito.”

## How do I distinguish *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* from native species?

### *Aedes albopictus*

Small, dark mosquito with a white dorsal stripe and banded legs.



### *Aedes aegypti*

Small, dark mosquito with white lyre-shaped marking with banded legs.



Adult



Egg

Female *Aedes* mosquitoes lay black eggs on the wet, inner walls of water-holding containers above the waterline.



Pupa



Pupae change into adult mosquitoes. When development is complete, the pupal skin splits and the adult emerges from the water.



Larva

Larvae hatch when water inside the container covers the eggs. They feed on organic matter and microorganisms.