

Mosquito Control Information

There are several actions that individuals can take to reduce mosquitoes and increase comfort:

- Clean rain gutters, swimming pools, bird baths, and other standing water, and remove old tires and other potential breeding sites.
- Aerate landscaping ponds to keep water moving.
- Limit outside activities at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear light-colored clothing, since mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors.
- Wear repellent. Repellents with DEET and picaridin are very effective, but the amount used on children should be carefully monitored and those who prefer more natural products can choose from a wide variety, including geraniol and oil of lemon eucalyptus.
- Keep windows and doors tightly sealed and in good repair to keep mosquitoes out of the house.
- Use the larval insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) according to package directions.
- Some people find that citronella candles are effective repellents.
- Spray or fog personal yard space. (Be neighborly and make sure others are not bothered by the scent of candles or chemicals if you're using these options close to others' homes.)

In the fall of 2008, a committee made up of Brainerd City Council members, community residents, and city staff investigated mosquito control for the city. This has been a pesky topic for the city at other times in the past as well, so the committee reviewed the newspaper reports and council minutes from past discussions, scientific literature, and information about other cities' programs, and held interviews with a biologist and two product vendors.

The group discussed justification for trying to control mosquitoes in Brainerd, the potential costs, and city liability in using various methods of control. In light of the current budget situation, the committee made no recommendation on a citywide insecticide program. It was agreed that an education effort would be undertaken in the spring and summer, through a variety of media, to inform the greatest number of citizens about steps they can take individually to control mosquitoes.

The committee recommends that interested citizens search the Internet for such terms as "Mosquito control" or "Mosquito repellants" to find information that is most compatible with their desires for natural or chemical deterrents to these insects. A short list of starting points is included here.

<http://landscaping.about.com/cs/pestcontrol/a/mosquitocontrol.htm>

<http://walking.about.com/od/suncare/tp/repellent.htm>

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/yardandgarden/YGLNews/YGLN-May1501.html> - skeeter

<http://www.entomology.umn.edu/questions/index.html>

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef005.asp>