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## Mosquito Alert 8/4/16

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### **FLORIDA RESIDENTS NEED TO MAKE AN EFFORT TO ELIMINATE CONTAINER BREEDING MOSQUITOES AT HOME BY DUMPING, DRAINING OR FLUSHING ALL CONTAINERS THAT HOLD WATER**

Florida's warm and rainy conditions create a perfect breeding ground for mosquitoes. There are many kinds of mosquitoes. Most are harmless but many transmit mosquito borne diseases to humans, pets, livestock and wild animals. Because it is impossible to separate the mosquitoes that transmit diseases from the ones that do not, precautions should be taken to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes.

Three diseases; dengue, chikungunya and Zika virus are transmitted by the Asian tiger and the yellow fever container mosquitoes. Container mosquitoes do not travel far from where they hatch resulting in residents having the ability to greatly reduce the number of these mosquitoes by draining, covering and/or flushing all containers that hold water.

Home owners can reduce mosquitoes by eliminating breeding sites. Mosquitoes only need a few days to turn standing water into a hatchery. Any container that catches rain water, irrigation water or water that runs off a roof needs to be turned over or covered so that it will not collect water. Rain barrels, piles of aluminum cans and trays underneath outdoor plants fall into this category. Some containers such as tires collect water no matter how they lay on the ground. These types of containers need to be punctured at the lowest point so that all the water runs through them.

Your landscape can also be a home for mosquitoes. Certain plants, like bromeliads, have leaves that trap water where mosquitoes will breed. Bromeliads and birdbaths should be flushed at least weekly.

Plants also provide a place where adult mosquitoes can hide because the dense foliage shields them from drying out and dying.

#### **To avoid being bitten, residents should:**

1. Drain, cover and/or flush containers.
2. Dress appropriately so skin is covered when outside.
3. Use insect repellants correctly. Not all mosquito repellants are created equal. Effectiveness varies with active ingredient & weather conditions, some last longer than others. Deet is the most effective active ingredient.

**Be aware that the previous advice of avoiding being outside at dusk and dawn is not being recommended at this time because these two container mosquitoes feed all the time.**

#### **Important ZIKA related resources:**

Mosquito repellants: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in419>

Traveler's website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

Container mosquitoes: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in851>

Control % prevention: <http://www.amcdsjc.org/mosquito--pest-info/control--prevention.aspx>

Florida Department of Health Update: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/zika-virus/>

Protecting yourself from mosquitoes: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/StopMosquitoes/>

**Call 904-966-6299 to report high levels of mosquitoes in Bradford County.**

8/4/2016 Mosquito Alert by Jim DeValerio, Bradford County Extension

