

Mosquito Management
P R O G R A M

*Personal
Protection
Against
Mosquitoes
Using
DEET*

State of

C O N N E C T I C U T

Safe Use of Pesticides to Control Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes can be found in a variety of settings including salt marshes, swamps, catch basins and artificial containers. Some mosquitoes can spread diseases such as West Nile virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

The most effective way to eliminate mosquitoes is to follow some basic maintenance practices which includes getting rid of standing water. Another option available to both the homeowner and municipality is the use of pesticides. However, there is some basic information the public should be aware of and follow prior to using pesticides or insect repellents to ensure their safe and proper application.

State of Connecticut Mosquito Management Program

The State's mosquito monitoring and management program is a collaborative effort involving the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and the University of Connecticut Department of Pathobiology (UCONN). The program is coordinated by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Personal Protection Using DEET

The chemical DEET – N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide – is the most widely used insect repellent in the country. It can reduce the risk of mosquito and tick bites, but products containing DEET must be used properly.

How should DEET be used?

- Read and follow the instructions on the label. Avoid over-application.
- For most people (casual use), a high concentration of DEET is not needed. Products with 10% to 35% DEET will provide adequate protection under most conditions.
- Use just enough repellent to cover exposed skin and/or clothing.
- Do not spray directly on face, spray into hands and then apply to face.
- Do not apply over cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do not use under clothing.
- Do not spray DEET-containing products in enclosed areas.
- After returning indoors, wash treated skin with soap and water.
- Wash treated clothing before wearing again.

Use caution when using DEET on children.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, repellents used on children should not contain more than 10% DEET.

- Do not apply on hands or near eyes and mouth of young children.
- Do not allow children to apply DEET themselves.
- Dress children in long sleeves and pants, when possible, apply repellent to clothing rather than skin.
- After returning indoors, wash any treated skin with soap and water.



Will using DEET affect my health?

DEET has been used for more than 40 years by millions of people worldwide. Products containing DEET have been occasionally associated with some health problems such as skin reactions, including rash, swelling, itching, and eye irritation. In very rare circumstances, slurred speech, confusion and seizures have been associated with the use of DEET, particularly in children. The risk of experiencing any adverse health effects is reduced when products containing DEET are used according to directions.

What should I do if I have medical questions about DEET?

If you suspect that you or your child are reacting to an insect repellent, discontinue use, wash treated skin and call your physician. If you feel that it is an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency service. If you go to a doctor or hospital, take the repellent with you.

You and your doctor can get specific medical information about the active ingredients in repellents and other pesticides by calling:

- National Pesticide Telecommunications Network (NPTN) at 1-800-858-7378. NPTN operates from 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Time) 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) seven days a week.
- Information can also be obtained from the Connecticut Poison Control Center, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-343-2722.

Can I use a repellent that does not contain DEET?

The use of an insect repellent containing DEET is not the only way to reduce the risk of bites from mosquitoes, ticks and other biting insects that may transmit disease. The Connecticut Department of Public Health encourages other precautions – such as wearing long pants and long-sleeved shirts.

If you do not want to use a product that contains DEET, or your physician advises you to avoid DEET, there are other products that can give you limited protection. These repellents generally use plant-based oils to repel insects. In comparison to DEET-based products, plant-based repellents generally show effectiveness for a short period of time (usually less than 2 hours).

If you have any additional questions about DEET.

Call the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health at 860-509-7742.

Mosquito Management Program Information:

Department of Environmental Protection

Website- <http://dep.state.ct.us>

(860) 424-4184 - *Latest information on test results, spray locations, protective measures.*

(860) 642-7630 - *Technical questions regarding mosquitoes, mosquito control measures.*

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

Website - <http://www.state.ct.us/caes>

(203) 974-8500 - *Mosquito trapping.*

Department of Public Health

Website - <http://www.state.ct.us/dph>

(860) 509-7994 - *WNV infections in people.*

(860) 509-7742 - *Effects of pesticides on people.*

Department of Agriculture

Website - <http://www.state.ct.us/doag>

(860) 713-2505 - *WNV infections in domestic animals, including livestock, poultry, and pets.*

Call your local health department to report dead birds. You can find the number in the blue pages of your local phone book.

This brochure was written by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Epidemiology and Occupational Health, for the Mosquito Management Program.



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