

MEDIA RELEASE

Shire of Esperance

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MOSQUITO SURVEILLANCE STARTS THIS SPRING IN ESPERANCE

The Shire of Esperance is drafting a Mosquito Management Plan which will provide operational guidance on the control and management of seasonal mosquitoes and reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease.

Some mosquitoes are known to have the potential to carry diseases such as Ross River and Barmah Virus while others are known as nuisance mosquitoes with the potential to impact on the quality of life of residents. While they may be pests, mosquitoes are an important component of the local ecosystem. The challenge is creating a balance while implementing a control program that has little impact on the environment while reducing the risk of the community being exposed to mosquito-borne diseases.

Shire of Esperance Director of External Services, Terry Sargent said "Shire environmental health officers will be setting mosquito traps and conducting larvae sampling to collect baseline data. The traps will be set at dusk on a monthly basis for seven months to investigate mosquito numbers and the species that have the potential to carry viruses."

There are some simple things we can all do reduce breeding and protect ourselves from mosquito borne diseases as the weather begins to warm up.

Simple ways to prevent breeding include:

- emptying out or discarding containers and rubbish that may hold water
- cleaning out roof gutters to prevent water from pooling
- regular emptying, cleaning and refilling of bird baths, stock troughs and pet water bowls keeping swimming pools properly maintained and free of debris
- emptying wading pools at the end of each day
- stocking backyard ponds with suitable fish species to eat mosquito larvae
- covering rainwater and septic tanks, wells or other large water containers with mesh
- keeping edges of ponds clear of vegetation

You can avoid being bitten by:

- avoiding outdoor exposure particularly around dusk and dawn
- covering up with long loose fitting, light coloured clothing
- applying repellent containing 20% of DEET or picardin to exposed skin or clothing

More information can be found at: <http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/fightthebite>

Ends

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