

Pasco County Mosquito Control District

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www.pascomosquito.org

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Emergency Management Activation: Mosquitoes and Hurricanes

As we prepare for the approaching storm event, it's important to understand the impact severe weather has on mosquito populations. Following a hurricane, conditions can become favorable for rapid mosquito production. It's crucial to address the potential health risks posed by mosquitoes, which can thrive in the aftermath of severe weather. Effective mosquito control is essential to protect our community from mosquito-borne diseases.

What happens to mosquitoes during a hurricane and immediately following the storm?

- During the storm:
 - Generally, adult mosquitoes do not survive high winds produced by hurricanes.
 - Mosquitoes are weak fliers and do not fly during heavy rainfall.
- Standing water: Heavy rainfall and flooding create numerous breeding sites for mosquitoes.
 - Even small amounts of stagnant water can become ideal habitats for mosquito larvae.
- Immediately following a hurricane: nuisance mosquitoes hatch in very large numbers.
 - Floodwater mosquito populations are expected to rise significantly in the weeks following the storm.
 - Disease vector mosquito species can thrive in this environment.
 - PCMCD works to resume activities as soon as conditions allows, however because there are such large areas that may need to be treated, the district must prioritize areas in most need of attention. Treatments made may not be permanent - remember that mosquitoes fly, sometimes over several miles. Even though an area may be treated to knock down the biting mosquitoes, there will likely be re-infestations from other areas due to the wide-spread flooding throughout the area.

Key Messages for Pasco Residents

- **Be Proactive**
 - Before the hurricane, eliminate potential breeding sites by emptying containers and ensuring your yard is free of standing water. Pick up and store items that can hold water if it is not necessary to keep such items outside.
- **Post Storm Actions**
 - After the storm, inspect your property for new areas where water has collected, ensuring your yard is free of standing water.

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- **Drain and Cover**

- **Drain:** Remove all standing water.
 - Empty water-holding containers around your yards, such as plant trivets, pet dishes, bird baths, used tires, wheelbarrows, children's toys, tree holes, and bromeliads. Something as small as a bottle cap can produce mosquitoes.
- **Cover:** Protect yourself with proper clothing and mosquito repellent when outdoors, especially during dawn and dusk.
 - Wear long sleeved-shirts, long pants, socks, and shoes when outside.
 - Use a US EPA-registered mosquito repellent on exposed skin and clothing. Use repellents with the active ingredient DEET, picaridin, or IR3535.
 - Use screens on windows and doors. Check for holes in screens after the storm.

- **Community Efforts**

- PCMCD is actively monitoring the storm and will resume performing mosquito control treatments as soon as conditions allow.
 - Staff perform surveillance each day to identify where high mosquito populations are occurring and to treat the habitats that are producing them.
 - Larvicide activity will be performed by ground using backpacks, trucks, and ATVs, and by air.
 - Ultra Low Volume (ULV) trucks and aerial applications are used in areas with high adult mosquito activity.
 - To identify areas where adult applications are scheduled, please visit the Service Request tab at PascoMosquito.org after 3:30pm daily.
- Your cooperation in reducing breeding sites before and after the storm is essential.
- If the need should arise, The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will likely activate their emergency Mosquito Control Incident Response Team (MCIRT) to address the surge in mosquito populations and provide emergency adult mosquito control applications for counties impacted by the storms. This could be a potential avenue for the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners, Department of Health, and the PCMCD to collaboratively request assistance.

- **Stay Vigilant and Stay Informed**

- Follow updates from local Emergency Management and the PCMCD for information on control efforts and health risks.
 - Follow Pasco County, Florida, Government on social media or MyPasco.net
 - [@PascoMosquito](https://twitter.com/PascoMosquito) on social media, PascoMosquito.org, or 727-376-4568

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Condensed PCMCD Emergency Management Activation Messaging

Drain & Cover to protect yourself from mosquitoes after the storm.

- Drain standing water around your homes and businesses
 - Water-holding containers such as plant trivets, pet dishes, bird baths, used tires, wheelbarrows, children's toys, tree holes, and bromeliads serve as mosquito production sites
 - Remove, drain, cover, or otherwise render containers incapable of holding water
- Wear protective clothing
 - Long sleeves and long pants with socks and shoes
- Use a US EPA-registered mosquito repellent containing active ingredients DEET, picaridin, or IR3535
 - Always use in accordance to the product label
- Stay indoors whenever possible
 - Check homes for damaged window and door screens
- PCMCD will resume mosquito control operations as soon as the storm passes and weather and roadway conditions allow

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