



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

Dear HOA Representative:

The Fairfax County Health Department's Disease Carrying Insects Program works to minimize the threat of mosquito-borne diseases through active mosquito surveillance, control activities and community education. This summer we are concerned about an emerging disease threat called Zika, a virus that has been spreading throughout Central and South America, Mexico, the Caribbean and parts of the Pacific and is linked to severe birth defects in children born to infected mothers. Florida's Miami-Dade County is the only place in the continental United States to report local transmission of the virus by mosquitoes.

The Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*), a possible vector for this disease, is common in northern Virginia. Because mosquito season will not end until the first hard frost of the year, it is important that residents remain vigilant about preventing mosquitoes around their homes and protecting themselves from bites for the remainder of the summer and fall.

### Control mosquitoes in your yard:

- **Eliminate standing water.** The most effective way to control the Asian tiger mosquito is to tip and toss standing water from artificial containers like tires, buckets, flower pots, corrugated drain pipes, tarps, toys, etc. Discard containers or place indoors.
- **Treat standing water with a larvicide if it cannot be eliminated.** If you can't get rid of the water, treat it with a mosquito-specific, environmentally-friendly product such as Mosquito Dunks®, which are available at hardware stores and garden centers.
- **If mosquitoes are biting, consider treating your yard with an insecticide.** Used carefully and according to label instructions, an insecticide can help control biting mosquitoes. Pay attention to bushy green plants, ivy, other ground-covering plants and bamboo, which are hiding places for mosquitoes.
- **Organize a neighborhood clean-up.** Get rid of litter and debris, discard old tires and manage vegetation that mosquitoes may be using as hiding places.

### Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites:

- **Wear an EPA-registered insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535.** Insect repellent is safe and effective for children and pregnant women, too. Always apply according to label instructions. If using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and then repellent.
- **Dress to protect.** Cover exposed skin by wearing loose-fitting, light-colored long-sleeved shirts and pants. For extra protection, treat clothing with permethrin or purchase permethrin-treated clothing and gear. Never apply permethrin on skin and always follow label instructions.
- **Keep mosquitoes out of your home.** Keep doors and windows closed. Make sure screens are in good repair. Use air-conditioning when available.

Please consider sharing this information with your HOA members or including in your next newsletter. Enclosed is a copy of our Zika fact sheet. More information can be found on our website at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd).

## Fairfax County Health Department

Division of Environmental Health

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[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd)



We would also like to have a representative from the Health Department attend your next association meeting to give a brief overview of Zika and mosquito control. To schedule a presentation, please contact us at 703-246-8931 or email to [HDLiaison@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:HDLiaison@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Thank you for your attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,



David M. Wilder, DO, MPH  
Public Health Physician

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