

Controlling mosquito breeding after floods, storms and cyclones

Mosquito numbers can increase after floods, storms and cyclones as standing water from heavy rainfall and flooding provides the perfect conditions for mosquito breeding. Increased numbers of mosquitoes lead to an increased risk of being bitten and mosquito-borne diseases.



Photograph by Paul Zborowski

- palm fronds
- buckets
- tin cans and plastic containers
- boats
- coconut shells
- roof gutters (if blocked by leaf debris).

Rainwater tanks can also be a potential breeding site for mosquitoes. You can reduce risk by:

- checking the mosquito screens and flap valves on rainwater tanks—particularly in-ground tanks—to ensure that the screens and flap valves are still in place.
- making any necessary repairs.

Protecting you and your family

You can reduce the number of potential breeding sites around your home by:

- cleaning up around your house and yard following a cyclone or flood and getting rid of potential mosquito breeding sites
- removing any pools of water around your house and yard—this may involve clearing debris from ditches, cutting small channels to help pooling water drain, or filling in holes and vehicle wheel ruts
- cleaning up debris deposited on your property by flood waters or cyclone. While a lot of this debris may be half-buried, it often contains enough water to breed large numbers of mosquitoes.

Rain or floodwater may have also collected in containers around your yard, so make sure you tip the water out of the containers and store them in a dry place, or throw them away. Common mosquito breeding sites include:

- pot plant bases (inside and outside)
- tyres
- tarpaulins



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Avoid being bitten

There are several simple steps you can take to reduce your risk of being bitten by mosquitoes:

- wear insect repellent whenever mosquitoes are present
- wear long, loose, light-coloured clothing
- use flying insect spray to kill any mosquitoes in rooms
- use mosquito coils or plug-in insecticide mats in rooms
- repair defective insect screens.

See a doctor immediately if you become unwell with fever, headache, skin rash, joint or muscle pain.



Further information

For more information:

Online resources

- visit Queensland Health's website for information about natural disasters at www.health.qld.gov.au/healthieryou/disaster
- read Queensland Health's fact sheet about mosquito-borne disease in Queensland www.health.qld.gov.au/mozziediseases/default.asp
- Read Queensland Health's fact sheet about rainwater tanks www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/ehu/32922.pdf
- visit the Emergency Management Queensland website and read: Prepare for cyclone, storm, flood and tsunami now! www.emergency.qld.gov.au/emq/css/beprepared.asp
- visit the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/index.htm>

Contacts

- **call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) at any time for practical medical advice**
- **contact your doctor, hospital or health clinic**
- **contact your local Queensland Health public health unit.**

For further information,

contact your nearest Queensland Health public health unit:

Brisbane North	Tel: 3624 1111	Darling Downs	Tel: 4631 9888	Mount Isa and Gulf	Tel: 4744 9100
Brisbane South	Tel: 3000 9148	Gold Coast	Tel: 5668 3700	South West	Tel: 4656 8100
Bundaberg	Tel: 4150 2780	Hervey Bay	Tel: 4184 1800	Sunshine Coast	Tel: 5409 6600
Cairns	Tel: 4226 5555	Logan	Tel: 3412 2989	Townsville	Tel: 4753 9000
Central Queensland	Tel: 4920 6989	Mackay	Tel: 4911 0400	West Moreton	Tel: 3413 1200
Central West	Tel: 4652 6000	Moreton Bay	Tel: 3142 1800		