

Controlling mosquito breeding after floods, storms and cyclones

Fact sheet

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.

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
- removing any pools of standing 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.



Figure 1 Mosquito

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 dispose of them responsibly. Common mosquito breeding sites include

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

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 or plug-in insecticide devices to kill mosquitoes indoors
- repair defective insect screens.

See a doctor immediately if you become unwell with fever, headache, skin rash, joint or muscle pain. See fact sheet “Mosquito-borne diseases after a storm, flood or cyclone” for greater detail on infections related to mosquitoes in Queensland.



Figure 2 Mosquito

Further information

- Department of Health <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/disaster>
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mozziediseases/default.asp>
https://www.health.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/719773/rainwater-tank.pdf
- Disaster Management <http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>
- Workplace Health and Safety Electrical Safety Office Workers' Compensation Regulator
<https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/>
- Contact your doctor, hospital or health clinic
- Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) at any time
- Contact 13 QGOV (13 74 68) for your nearest public health unit.