

## **Document 2 - Overview of OPH public messaging and education with respect to West Nile virus (WNV) and mosquito control**

### **Eliminating standing water sites around your home is crucial to reduce the risk**

Mosquitoes need water to breed. Help eliminate mosquitoes around your property by reducing or eliminating areas or objects that can accumulate or retain water. Here are some suggestions:

- Look around/outside your house for containers, receptacles and any other items that might collect water. Be sure to empty them regularly, turn them over when appropriate, or dispose of them accordingly.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outdoors so that water can drain out.
- Clean clogged roof gutters; remove leaves and debris that may prevent drainage of rainwater.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in birdbaths at least once per week; aerate private ornamental ponds or treat them with an approved mosquito larvicide such as Bti if they do not have an outflow into natural waters.
- Keep swimming pools clean and properly chlorinated; remove standing water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

### **Protect yourself from mosquito bites**

Reduce your chance of infection from vector borne illness by doing the following:

- Apply an [approved mosquito repellent](#) to exposed skin and clothing.
- Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, shoes and socks to protect exposed skin.
- Wear light-coloured, tightly woven clothing – mosquitoes are attracted to darker colours and can still bite through thin clothing.
- Avoid the hours between dusk and dawn—periods when mosquitoes are most active—and at any time in shady, wooded areas. Take extra care to use

repellent and protective clothing from dusk to dawn or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times.

- Make sure all windows and doors in your home have well-fitting screens that are in good condition.