



EL PASO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

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Fighting West Nile Virus with Larvacides Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are larvacides?

A: Larvacides are products that kill mosquito larvae. Treatment of standing water, where mosquitoes breed and lay their eggs, is desirable because if mosquito larvae never emerge as adults, they never get a chance to bite people or animals and spread diseases, including West Nile virus. Also, killing mosquito larvae can reduce the need to spray or take other actions to kill adult mosquitoes.

Q: Is there more than one type of larvacide?

A: Yes, the Environmental Protection Agency recognizes several types of larvacide that work in different ways. But the type most in common household use is a biological larvacide made up of bacteria that are found naturally in soil. This type of larvacide, available as doughnut-shaped “dunks,” is sold at most garden and home improvement stores. This same natural larvacide is available in pellet and other forms for large bodies of water.



Q: How does this “dunk” larvacide work? Can it hurt pets or wildlife?

A: Larvacide “dunks” kill mosquito larvae by damaging their digestive systems, causing them to starve to death. Tests have shown that this biological larvacide does not harm fish, birds, wildlife, pets or people. This product is designed to work for up to 30 days at a time. Product labeling provides guidance on how much to use and other details. We recommend that you read and follow product labels as to use, storage and handling.

Q: What other options are available to reduce the mosquito populations?

A: Other larvacides are available that work in different ways. Also, some communities spray to kill adult mosquitoes. For more information, use these resources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

(970) 221-6400

Fax: (970) 221-6476

E-mail: dvbid@cdc.gov

Web site: <http://www.cdc.gov>

National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC)

(800) 858-7378

E-mail: npic@ace.orst.edu

Web site: <http://npic.orst.edu/>

Fight the Bite Colorado

www.fightthebitecolorado.com