

CITRUS COUNTY MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT

Commissioners:
Albert Jordan
Leon McClellan
Brenda Buzby



Director:
George Deskins

Official Press Release

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New Mosquito Control Aerial Operations

Mosquito control programs face a new challenge when combating the mosquitoes that vector Zika, Chikungunya and Dengue Fever. These challenges are the result of the breeding habitat of two specific mosquitoes, *Aedes Albopictus* and *Aedes Aegypti*. The preferred breeding location for these species are containers such as buckets, rain barrels, clogged gutters, plant trays or any container that can hold water for more than three days. Even an upturned water bottle cap has the potential to breed numerous mosquitoes. The most effective treatment method is to simply dump out containers after a rain event, thereby eliminating the breeding capacity. Unfortunately many homeowners don't perform this task and are breeding mosquitoes in their own backyard, mosquitoes that can potentially spread viruses. Mosquito control employees cannot access every backyard to dump or treat this standing water.

To solve this problem and provide better control of these domestic mosquitoes, Citrus County Mosquito Control will, on occasion, be performing aerial larvicide spray missions by helicopter, targeting more urban or densely populated areas of the county, such as Beverly Hills and Inverness Highlands. Larviciding is the act of controlling mosquitoes in the larval stage, before they become a flying, biting adult with the potential to spread viruses.

These aerial missions will take place mostly in the summer months during the evening or early morning. Citrus County Mosquito Control District will do our best to avoid crowds and groups of people that may be outside during this time of day. Due to winds while spraying, product will drift hundreds of feet from the aircraft to the intended target area on the ground. Computer guidance systems in the aircraft calculate these offset distances upwind so the spray will drift into the intended target.

The product that we are using for these missions is Altosid Liquid Larvicide and its active ingredient is Methoprene. Methoprene is an insect growth regulator that prevents emergence of adult mosquitoes and has been used for over 40 years in many industries. EPA and FDA recognize Methoprene as safe for usage in many industries including mosquito control.

"... data indicate an extremely low potential for acute toxicity to humans from overexposure to either racemic or (S)-Methoprene via the oral, dermal, ocular or inhalation routes of exposure." – EPA FACT SHEET (https://www3.epa.gov/pesticides/chem_search/reg_actions/reregistration/fs_PC-105401_1-Jun-01.pdf)