

# Toolbox Talks



## *Mosquitoes – Protect Yourself!*

West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) are spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. The best way to avoid infection is to avoid being bitten. Unavoidably, many municipal operations require that we work in areas where there are mosquitoes. To the best extent, you can, reduce your risk of mosquito bites by doing the following:

### **Always...**

- ⇒ Use insect repellent on your skin and clothes. Follow the manufacturer's directions for safe use.
- ⇒ When possible, wear a hat, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks when you are outdoors. Also, wear head nets when venturing into areas with high mosquito populations.
- ⇒ Eliminate as many sources of standing water from the worksite as possible to decrease mosquito populations. (Mosquitoes will breed in any puddle that lasts for more than four days). Remove debris from ditches.
- ⇒ Remove discarded tires or keep them dry and under cover. Used tires have become one of the most significant mosquito breeders in the country.
- ⇒ Turn over, cover, store or remove equipment such as tarps, buckets, barrels, wheelbarrows, and containers to prevent standing water.
- ⇒ Drill holes in the bottom of recycled containers that are left outdoors. Containers with drainage holes on the sides can still collect enough water for mosquitoes to breed.



### **At Home....**

- ⇒ Install or repair window and door screens so that mosquitoes cannot get indoors.
- ⇒ When temperatures are above 55°F or whenever mosquitoes are active, consider staying indoors at dawn, dusk and in the early evening, which are peak mosquito biting times.
- ⇒ Mow the lawn at least once a week. Mosquitoes can hide in the shade of tall grass.
- ⇒ Place mosquito netting over infants in carriers when they are outdoors.
- ⇒ For entertaining outside, use a screened porch or screen house.
- ⇒ Clean clogged roof gutters every year, particularly if leaves from surrounding trees tend to plug the drains: Roof gutters are easily overlooked but can produce millions of mosquitoes each season.
- ⇒ Scrub the sides of water containers to dislodge eggs and change water in birdbaths and other water containers every four to five days.

