Santa Clara County Vector Control
Protecting Public Health

Fogging for Adult Mosquitoes
Questions and Answers

Q. What will trigger fogging in a Community?

1. If West Nile virus is detected in the community, the District's initial response will be to intensify its efforts to reduce mosquito breeding sites and increase its levels of larviciding in those areas in which West Nile virus has been found. Reducing the adult mosquito population with pesticides (adulticides) approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be done if necessary to prevent human illness or to suppress a disease transmitting mosquitoes. The decision to fog, with truck mounted equipment will be based on surveillance information or the documentation of West Nile virus activity at a level that indicates a threat to human health. Fogging will be concentrated in areas most at risk for disease occurrence and will be conducted by certified and licensed applicators. The District's aggressive campaign against mosquito larvae is intended to minimize the need to use adulticides.

Q. What pesticides will you use?

1. When necessary, our District may use ground applications of pesticides to kill mosquitoes that pose a health risk to the residents of Santa Clara County. In the case of adulticiding, or targeting adult mosquitoes, Santa Clara County Vector Control will use a botanical insecticide (plant derived compounds) pyrethrin with piperonyl butoxide. The product labels and its Material Safety Data Sheet may be found on our website.

Q. What risks are there to the residents of Santa Clara County?

1. The risks to the public and to the environment are very low. Mosquito adulticides are applied as ultra-low volume (ULV) sprays. ULV applications involve small quantities of active ingredient in relation to the size of the area treated, typically less than 3 ounces per acre, which minimizes exposure and risk to people and the environment.

Q. Where will the spraying take place?

1. The spraying will take place in areas of concern, as determined by our mosquito and disease surveillance programs. Our trained and certified technicians use a variety or surveillance techniques and treatment criteria to ensure effective mosquito control with the least amount of risk to our residents and our environment.

Q. What are the risks to the environment?

1. The risks to the public and to the environment are very low. Mosquito adulticides are applied as ultra-low volume (ULV) sprays. ULV applications involve small quantities of active ingredient in relation to the size of the area treated, typically less than 3 ounces per acre, which minimizes exposure and risk to people and the environment.

Q. Will the insecticides that are fogged kill all types of mosquitoes that can transmit West Nile?

1. Yes. The pesticides we use target a variety of mosquitoes than can transmit West Nile virus as well as other diseases.

Q. Should I Take Steps to Reduce Exposure to Pesticides During Mosquito Control Spraying?

1. Generally, there is no need to relocate during mosquito control spraying. The pesticides have been evaluated for this use and found to pose minimal risks to human health and the environment when used according to label directions. Although mosquito control pesticides pose low risks, some people may prefer to avoid or further minimize exposure. Some common sense steps to help reduce possible exposure to pesticides include:

- Visit this website for announcements about spraying and remain indoors during applications in the immediate area.
- People who suffer from chemical sensitivities or feel spraying may aggravate a preexisting health condition, may consult their physician or local health department and take special measures to avoid exposure.
- Close windows and turn off window-unit air conditioners when spraying is taking place in the immediate area.
- Keep children's toys indoors.

Since the spray dissipates in a few hours, it is not necessary to wash off outdoor furniture or playground equipment before use.