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Mosquitoes Potentially Carrying West Nile Virus Soon to Appear

The recent heavy rains caused many pools of water to occur in Texas. This means we are encountering more of the floodwater mosquitoes, such as *Aedes vexans* and container-breeding mosquitoes, such as *Aedes albopictus* (the Asian tiger mosquito). Also as the weather warms and things begin to dry out, we can expect to see more of the southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*. This mosquito is the main mosquito responsible for transmitting West Nile Virus.

We can reduce some of the mosquito populations, especially the container breeding mosquitoes by simply emptying containers. It is important to walk around your home and landscape to make sure that wheelbarrows, wading pools, and any other backyard items that collect and hold water are emptied. Also if water must sit in containers, such as in bird baths or pet's dishes, then remember to change the water at least once a week.

If outdoor activities can not be avoided, then it is important to apply insect repellents as a precaution. There are many different products that can be applied in order to prevent mosquitoes from biting. One choice is N,N-diethyl meta-toluamide or commonly known as DEET. Picaridin is another synthetic insect repellent that can be found at any retailer. Also oil of lemon eucalyptus is an example of a natural insect repellents.



Picture of Asian Tiger Mosquito, *Aedes albopictus* (Skuse) (Diptera: Culicidae). Photo by Bart Drees, Professor and Extension Entomologist.