



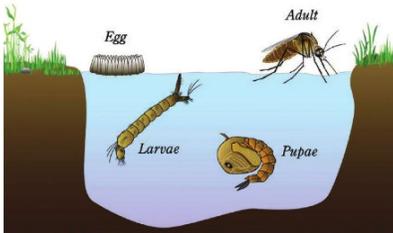
# AFPMB Bulletin

## Post-Hurricane Disease Vector and Pest Awareness

August 30, 2021

Effective disease vector and pest awareness starts with guidance for troops and their families on ways to protect themselves from biting and stinging threats. Biting mosquitoes are usually the primary threat, but other insects and arachnids dislocated by the event can also become medical threats. If you live where fire ants occur, you need to know that they form floating masses when flooded out and will float to any dry land or object and infest it. Displaced snakes, rodents, and other vertebrates can also be encountered, as well as their flea and tick parasites. Personal protection is the first line of defense, but widespread vector control to provide temporary suppression of disease vector populations may be the only way to effectively protect the public health.

THE MOSQUITO LIFE CYCLE

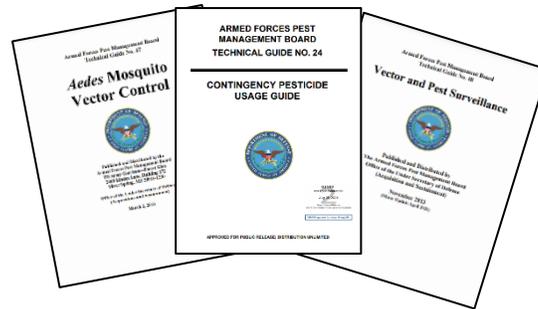


Excessive rain events are often followed by large numbers of host-seeking mosquitoes. This can increase the chance of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases and secondary infections that may occur as a result of mosquito bites. Mosquitoes can transmit West Nile virus and Zika virus, among other diseases. In addition, storm-related power outages are common after hurricanes, and can exacerbate mosquito and other pest problems. Tips for dealing with post-storm conditions:

- If you are outdoors or working in indoor areas that have lost screens and doors, wear insect repellent. Apply to exposed skin and clothing as allowed by the label, and remember to reapply as allowed.
- Use only [EPA-approved insect repellents](#) that contain active ingredients of DEET or picaridin.
- Wear long sleeves and long pants if you are outside. The more skin you cover, the fewer places for bugs to bite.
- Mosquitoes are most active from dusk until dawn. Be especially cautious during these hours.
- Repair or replace screens that were damaged or blown away. Repair cracks and gaps around doors and windows.
- If possible, keep all doors and windows shut. Don't keep windows without screens open.
- If you have power, run your air conditioner. Keep it clear of condensation and puddles.
- Structural damage from moisture can allow pests to enter and attack homes or offices. Repair structural damage such as holes, gaps, or weakened wood as soon as possible.
- Remove standing water. Mosquitoes can't breed without water. While you can't do anything about ponds, streams and marshes, you can certainly do something about standing water in your vicinity. Every type of container capable of holding two teaspoons of water is a potential breeding spot. When you spot something retaining stagnant water, dump it out immediately. Repeat at least once a week for as long as necessary.
- Downed trees, branches, and other organic debris (leaf piles, etc.) in exterior areas can provide harborage, nesting, or breeding grounds for pests. Remove debris if possible.

- Relocate trash and other debris to a distance from structures, as they can attract pests and wildlife.
- Remove debris from gutters to be sure water can flow freely through them, and clear debris from storm drains to allow water to flow away freely.

Application of insecticide is the most effective way to rapidly reduce the number of mosquitoes in a large area and does not present a significant risk to people, pets, or other animals. For extremely large areas, the Air Force Aerial Spray Flight C-130s may be called in. They can treat 120,000 acres in one mission. See Appendix F of AFPMB TG 24 for more information about aerial application requests.



Relevant AFPMB Technical Guides (TGs):

TG 36, [Personal Protective Measures against Insects and other Arthropods](#)

TG 47, [Aedes Mosquito Vector Control](#)

TG 48, [Vector and Pest Surveillance](#)

TG 24, [Contingency Pesticide Usage Guide](#)

TG 30, [Filth Flies: Significance and Control](#)

TG 41, [Rodent-Borne Diseases with Special Emphasis on Protection from Hantavirus](#)

Additional guidance is available at [the AFPMB website](#).

The CDC's *Hurricane Key Messages for Employers, Workers, and Volunteers* is an excellent source of information, downloadable [here](#).

**General questions?** Contact the [AFPMB](#); **Contingency questions?** Contact the [CLO](#); **Research questions?** Contact the [RLO](#); **Deployed Warfighter Protection Program questions?** Contact [the DWFP Program Manager](#)



**Note:** Mention of specific products or services in this document does not imply endorsement by the Armed Forces Pest Management Board, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.