



# MEDIA RELEASE

10 March 2017

## **Mosquito-Borne Disease Risk Increase Across WA**

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There has been increased publicity recently in regard to mosquito-borne diseases due to flooding throughout Western Australia.

People living or travelling throughout Western Australia do not need to change their travel plans, but should take extra precautions to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes, including:

- avoiding outdoor exposure particularly around dawn and dusk (and the first few hours after dark);
- wearing protective (long, loose-fitting, light coloured) clothing when outdoors;
- applying a personal repellent containing 20 per cent diethyltoluamide (DEET) or picaridin to exposed skin or clothing. The most effective and long-lasting formulations are lotions or gels. Natural or organic repellents may not be as effective as DEET or picaridin, or may need to be reapplied more frequently;
- wearing head nets if outdoors;
- ensuring insect screens are installed and in good condition – the use of bed nets when sleeping will offer further protection;
- using mosquito nets or mosquito-proof tents when camping or sleeping outdoors; and,
- ensuring infants and children are adequately protected against biting insects, preferably with suitable clothing, bed nets or other forms of insect screening.

The recent rainfall is also a timely reminder for residents to minimise mosquito breeding around the home by taking some simple steps to remove or modify breeding sites such as:

- empty out or dispose containers or rubbish which may hold water;
- stock ornamental ponds with fish and keeping vegetation away from the water's edge;
- keep swimming pools well chlorinated, filtered and free of dead leaves;
- fill or drain depressions in the ground that hold water;
- fit mosquito proof covers to vent pipes on septic tank systems and sealing all gaps around the lid and ensure leach drains are completely covered;
- screen rainwater tanks with insect proof mesh, including inlet, overflow and inspection ports;
- clean our roof gutters to prevent water pooling;
- empty pot plant drip trays once a week or fill them with sand; and,
- empty, clean and refill animal and pet drinking water bowls once a week.

For more information on how to prevent mosquito bites visit:  
<http://healthywa.wa.gov.au/fightthebite>.

The Shire is currently undertaking weekly routine fogging in Lake Grace and Newdegate townsites. Due to the recent flood event the Shire is investigating further options to reduce the mosquito infestation around all townsites, however, it is equally as important that the community itself implements some of the simple steps recommended in this Media Release.

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