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"You" are the first line of defense against mosquitoes and mosquito-borne illnesses, says the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management

MIAMI (January 29, 2016) — When it comes to protecting against annoying mosquito bites—and potentially serious mosquito-borne illnesses—*you* are the first line of defense, according to the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM).

"While we certainly have a proactive mosquito control program in Miami-Dade County, we can't possibly be everywhere at once," said Deputy County Mayor and DSWM Director Alina T. Hudak. "That's why it's important for residents to check their properties and ensure there is no standing water, where mosquitoes can breed."

Of particular concern is the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. Known by the white-striped pattern on its legs, this mosquito species is a vector for various tropical diseases including dengue, chikungunya and, more recently in the news, Zika.

Aedes aegypti mosquitoes like to breed in containers filled with stagnant water and plants that hold water, such as bromeliads. Unfortunately, with all the rainfall that comes down in Miami-Dade County, that means the mosquito can breed anywhere people are: lawns, vacant lots, common areas and more.

The good news is you can do your part to help reduce the mosquito nuisance, by remembering to drain and cover.

Drain

- Drain all standing water around the yard. Mosquitoes need only a surprisingly small amount of water to breed. Empty cans, buckets, garbage cans, house gutters, flower pots,

bromeliads and other plants that hold water, bottles, toys, plastic "kiddie" pools, lids, old tires, pool covers, barrels and any other container or item that holds or can hold water.

- If you have a boat, turn it upside down if it's small enough, or cover it if it's too large to turn. Just make sure the boat cover doesn't also hold water.
- If you have a swimming pool, make sure to maintain it properly and run the pump every so often as mosquitoes do not like to breed in moving water.
- Twice a week, make sure to empty or rinse out bromeliads and other plants that hold water, pets' water bowls and birdbaths.

Cover

- Make sure your doors and windows are covered with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house. Protect infants with mosquito netting.
- Avoid going outside when mosquitoes are most active, at dawn and dusk. If you do have to be outside, cover yourself up by wearing loose, light-colored clothing (preferably long pants and long sleeves), shoes and socks.
- Use a repellent when you go outside. Follow the directions on the label. The best repellents use DEET or picaridin as the active ingredient.

Miami-Dade County's Mosquito Control Unit conducts numerous mosquito inspections and spraying operations throughout the County to help keep down the volume of mosquitoes. To request a mosquito inspection or to report a mosquito nuisance, please call 3-1-1. For more information on mosquito control in Miami-Dade County, visit www.miamidade.gov/solidwaste.

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To request materials in accessible format, sign language interpreters, and/or any accommodation to participate in any County-sponsored program or meeting, please call Julio Martinez, 305-375-4662 or email, Jm0452@miamidade.gov, five days in advance to initiate your request. TTY users may also call 711 (Florida Relay Service).

Public Works and Waste Management