

BUTTE COUNTY MOSQUITO
AND
VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

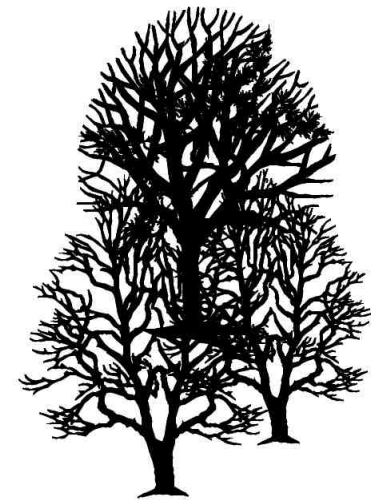
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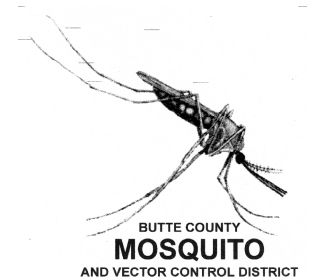
TREEHOLE OPERATIONS



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Treehole Operations

The Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District is working to reduce the number of treehole mosquitoes (*Aedes sierrensis*) in your neighborhood. The adults of this species are a vivid black and white, and are a major problem in foothill areas where trees are abundant.

Besides being a nuisance to humans, this mosquito is the primary vector of canine heartworm, a serious and often fatal disease in dogs.

Part of our control program includes eliminating treehole breeding sites during the winter. To accomplish this, the District organizes “treeholing” operations that are usually done in two stages.

First, District personnel choose a wooded area to inspect for tree cavities which hold rain water and may breed mosquitoes. Problem trees are tagged with colored tape to be easily identified and treated the following day.

The second day, sand is transported to the site and the filling begins. Leaves and debris are removed from

the tree cavities, then sand is packed into the hole and tamped down with a sturdy stick.

Treehole filling eliminates an important breeding source for mosquitoes without harming the tree. The treatment usually lasts about five years before it needs to be repeated. Extremely large tree cavities can sometimes be drained by drilling a hole at the base of the hollow.

Of course there are more trees and treeholes than the District can possibly eliminate. Therefore efforts are concentrated around residential areas where these mosquitoes can be especially troublesome.

Aedes sierrensis adults become a problem beginning in March and lasting through July. At this time of year we begin our aerosoling (or “fogging”) program for controlling adult mosquitoes. This is done in the morning or evening when mosquitoes are most active. The insecticides used by the District are approved by the U.S. and California EPA, and are safe for use around people and animals.

The effectiveness of aerosoling depends upon weather conditions and offers temporary relief. Treehole filling offers longer lasting control without the use of chemicals.

Property owners can help by examining the trees on their premises. Look for holes where branches have broken off and decay has produced pockets that hold water. Cavities may form where limbs have been cut or broken off, or in stumps that have been burned or hollowed out by decay. Crotches above ground where branches separate also can form water-holding pockets.

Treehole mosquitoes will also breed in water-filled containers such as tires, buckets, clogged rain gutters, children’s wading pools, especially if these contain organic debris such as leaves. Residents are encouraged to eliminate these breeding sources around the home.