

HOMESAFETYMATTERS

SUMMER 2024

IT'S SUMMER! IT'S ALSO SKEETER SEASON

Mosquitoes can be more than a simple backyard nuisance



Mosquitoes need still, undisturbed water for breeding. Check your property and eliminate standing sources of water, especially after a storm.

Mosquito bites aren't just itchy. A single bite is all it takes to transmit serious, mosquito-borne diseases. There are some things you can do to reduce your risk of being bitten.

Follow these nine tips from the Macomb Medical Clinic in Sterling Heights, Michigan, to avoid bites and lower your risk of disease.

Use mosquito repellent: Applying mosquito repellent to your skin and your clothing before going outdoors is one of the best ways to keep mosquitoes away.

Drape a net: Drape an area with mosquito netting for a protected shelter. You can also buy mosquito hats with netting that protects your face, a good choice for gardeners or hikers in mosquito-prone areas.

Eliminate standing water: Mosquitoes need still, undisturbed water for breeding. The females lay their eggs on the water surface. To keep mosquito populations down, look around for sources of standing water, like a clogged gutter, dirty birdbath, or bucket.

Wear protective clothing: Wearing lightweight clothing, like long pants and shirts with long sleeves, prevents mosquitoes from reaching your skin. Don't forget socks to protect your feet, ankles, and lower legs.

Skip the scents: Mosquitoes are attracted to floral scents. Skip perfume and scented body products or detergents.

Use a fan: Mosquitoes are tiny and lightweight, and their wings aren't very strong.

Stick to light colors: Mosquitoes prefer darker colors, and recent research shows they also like red, orange, and cyan (greenish blue).

Take a shower: Mosquitoes are attracted to sweat and other natural body odors. Take a shower, but don't use floral-scented products.

Avoid mosquito happy hours: Mosquitoes tend to be most active during the cooler, damper hours of the day, including both early morning and late afternoon or dusk.

SWIM SAFELY

Reduce the risk of drowning while enjoying the beach

Swimming in an ocean or lake requires attention to safety that is different from swimming in a pool.

Rip currents, underwater obstacles such as rocks and debris and unexpected water depth changes add to the danger.

The American Red Cross offers these tips:

- Always enter unknown or shallow water cautiously.
- Only dive in water clearly marked as safe for diving, at least 9 feet deep with no underwater obstacles. Never dive head first into surf!
- Do not enter the water from a height, such as a bridge or boat.
- Be careful when standing to prevent being knocked over by currents or waves.
- Swim sober.
- Supervise others sober and without distractions, such as reading or talking on or using a cell phone.
- Swim with a buddy even in life-guarded areas.



Always swim in an area with a lifeguard and never swim alone, regardless of your age or level of swimming skills.



RUDOLPH LIBBE INC
GEM INC
GEM ENERGY
RUDOLPH LIBBE PROPERTIES

TAKE CARE WHEN USING A GENERATOR

Keep everyone safe from carbon monoxide poisoning during outages

Last summer had more than a few instances when the power was out for more than a day and people relied on portable generators to get them through until power was restored.

Generators, whether fueled by gasoline, diesel or propane, produce carbon monoxide (CO). CO is called “The Invisible Killer” because it is colorless, odorless and can kill in minutes. More than 80 people die every year due to CO poisoning, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. It recommends the following do’s and don’ts when operating a portable generator:

- **DO** check that portable generators have had proper maintenance, and read and follow the labels, instructions and warnings on the generator and in the owner’s manual.
- **DO** operate portable generators outside only, at least 20 feet away from the house, and direct the generator’s exhaust away from the home and other buildings.
- **DO** ask retailers for a portable generator with a safety feature to shut off automatically when high CO concentrations are present.
- **DO** install battery-operated CO alarms or CO alarms with battery backup outside

SECURE YOUR HOME BEFORE VACATION

Make sure it looks like you’re still home; wait to post vacation photos

If you’re planning some vacation time this summer, make sure your home is secure and protected. Keep these safety tips from American Family Insurance in mind before you leave:

- Use smart home devices and security systems to protect your home while away.

HOW HOT IS TOO HOT FOR YOUR DOG’S PAWS WHEN GOING FOR A WALK?

When the thermometer registers 85 degrees and stays elevated throughout the day, taking your dog everywhere you go, even for a short outing, can be dangerous. Spending even a few minutes to meander through an outdoor event can prove hazardous. That’s because you’re wearing shoes to protect your feet, but your dog isn’t.



Portable generators can be of great value during a power outage but can be dangerous if not properly used.

sleeping areas, and on each floor of your home. Test alarms monthly.

- **DO** know the symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness and confusion. If CO poisoning is suspected, get outside immediately, then call 911.
- **DO** be a good neighbor. Check on neighbors during extended power outages.
- **DON’T** operate a portable generator inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace, shed or on a porch; and never leave a car running in an attached garage.
- **DON’T** use a portable generator near openings to your home including doors, windows or vents.
- **DON’T** ignore a CO alarm when it sounds. Get outside immediately, then call 911.

- Wait to post vacation photos to social media until after your trip.
- Make sure it looks like you’re still home; ask a friend to mow your lawn or put out your trash bins.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to keep an eye on your house.
- Set timers for your outdoor lights.

“Pavement, like asphalt or artificial grass, can become incredibly hot and cause discomfort, blisters, and burn a dog’s paw pads,” says Dr. Jerry Klein, DVM, chief veterinary officer for the American Kennel Club and an expert in veterinary emergency and critical care.

According to data reported by the Journal of the American Medical Association,

RIP CURRENT

DANGEROUS WATER

Rip currents are strong currents of water that pull people away from the shore and can be dangerous to even the strongest swimmers. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates 100 people die in rip currents every year.

Tips from the American Red Cross on how to avoid rip currents:

- Check conditions before entering the water: Are there any warning flags up? Ask a lifeguard about conditions and potential hazards.
- While in the water, stay at least 100 feet away from piers and jetties. Permanent rip currents often exist near these structures.

How to escape from a rip current:

- If you are caught in a rip current, don’t fight it.
- Swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current. Then, turn and swim to shore.
- Alternately, float or tread water until you are free of the rip current and then head to shore.
- If you can’t make it to shore, draw attention to yourself by waving and calling for help.

when the air temperature is 86 degrees, the asphalt temperature registers 135 degrees.

“To find out if the ground is too hot for your dog to walk on, place your hand comfortably on the pavement for 10 seconds. If it’s too hot for your hand, it’s too hot for your dog’s paws,” says Dr. Klein.