

# What You Need to Know About Aerial Spraying



Mosquito control districts or local government departments track both nuisance mosquitoes and mosquitoes that can spread viruses. When large numbers of nuisance or infected mosquitoes are found or when people in a large area are getting sick, airplanes and helicopters can treat very large areas with insecticides safely, quickly and efficiently. This process is called aerial spraying.

### Aerial spraying is used to:

- Control and reduce the number of mosquitoes, some of which can spread viruses.
- Help reduce your chances of getting sick.

### What does insecticide spraying do?

Airplanes and helicopters spray products that quickly kill either adult mosquitoes or mosquito larvae to reduce the number of mosquitoes in an area.

- Spraying larvicides kills mosquito larvae that hatch from eggs.
- Spraying adulticides quickly kills flying mosquitoes.
- Both larvicides and adulticides temporarily reduce the number of mosquitoes in an area, but do not permanently get rid of them.

### How does aerial spraying work?

- Airplanes spray very low volumes of either adulticide or larvicide into areas where mosquitoes are present.
- Aerial spraying of larvicides can occur at any time. Aerial spraying of adulticides occurs when mosquitoes are most active and when pollinating insects are not active.
- Aerial spraying is more effective and faster than truck-mounted or handheld sprayers in treating large areas of land.

### How will I know aerial spraying is going to take place?

The dates and times of aerial sprayings are typically announced in the local newspaper, on district websites, through public service announcements, by telephone, or through door-to-door campaigns.

### Is the spray harmful to people, pets, animals, or the environment?

No, when done correctly, truck spraying will not harm people, pets, animals, or the environment.

### Do I need to leave the area during aerial spraying?

No. You do not need to leave an area during aerial spraying. Because aerial spraying uses very low volumes of either adulticide or larvicide, you aren't likely to breathe or touch anything that has enough insecticide on it to harm you.



Airplane spraying either adulticide or larvicide onto targeted areas.  
Photo courtesy of Ed Freytag, City of New Orleans Mosquito & Termite Control Board

### Information on insecticides and health:

- ♦ The Environmental Protection Agency oversees the registration of these insecticides.
- ♦ The [National Pesticide Information Center \(NPIC\)](https://www.epa.gov/npic) provides information online or through a toll-free number, 1-800-858-7378.