

Montgomery County Health Department
Press Release

January 27, 2009 (Norristown, PA) In an effort to reach as many individuals in as many ways as possible, the Montgomery County Health Department will begin to disseminate both emergency and non-emergency messages through the region's new **ReadyNotifyPA** communication system.

ReadyNotifyPA is a system that helps local officials in Southeastern Pennsylvania send emergency alerts and other important notifications to residents quickly. **ReadyNotifyPA** can send these to a cell phone, pager, BlackBerry, PDA and/or E-mail account. The resident decides how they would like to be notified. These **alerts are free**; however, cellular providers may charge for text messaging.

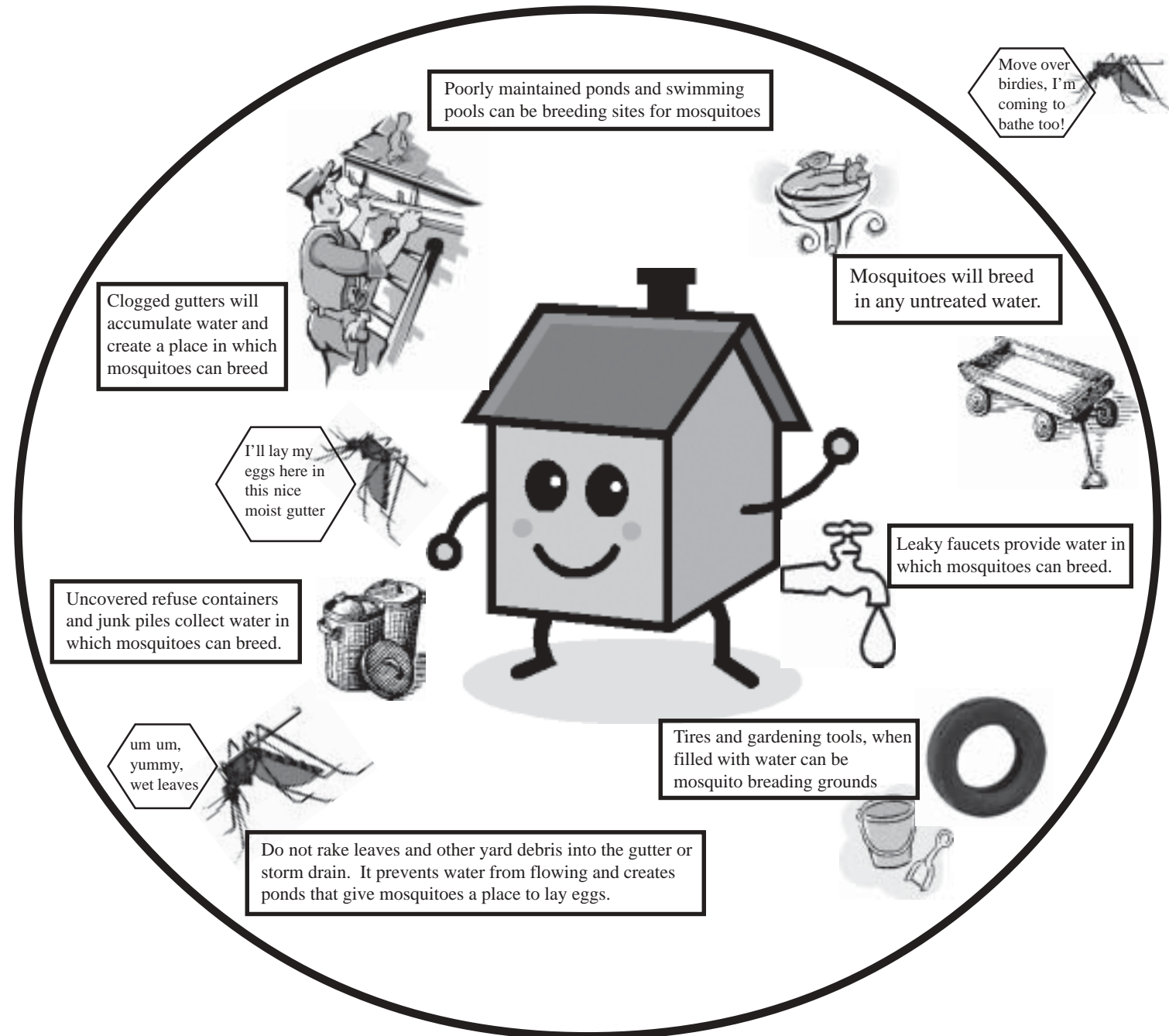
Residents can select what county or counties they would like to receive alerts from, as well as, municipalities, weather and traffic alerts. **In order to receive alerts from the Health Department, they will need to select "Health Alerts" when registering their account.**

To access ReadyNotifyPA residents can go to the website:
<https://montco.alertpa.org/>

**READY
NOTIFY PA**

Find Out First

Eliminate Breeding Sites Around Your Home



LIFE CYCLE & BIOLOGY OF MOSQUITOES

Mosquito is a Spanish or Portuguese word meaning *little fly*, derived from Latin “*musca*”. The term has been used in North American since 1583.

There are at least 18 species (types) of mosquitoes in Montgomery County. A number of these are capable of transmitting diseases to humans and animals. All mosquitoes require water for their growth. Depending on the species, the water can be fresh, brackish (salty), clean or polluted.

The life cycle of the mosquito has **4** developmental stages - **egg, larva, pupa, and adult**. The first three stages occur in water. The last stage becomes the flying adult.

After mating with the male and blood feeding, the female mosquito lays her **eggs** on water surfaces or in low areas that are likely to become flooded. Eggs that are laid directly on the water hatch in 2-3 days. Eggs that are deposited in low areas after flooding may survive in a dry state for several years.

The eggs hatch into **larvae** which shed (molt) their outer shells as they grow larger. Larvae may be found in marshes, swamps, rain puddles, cesspools, unattended pools, tree holes, birdbaths, clogged gutters, children’s toys, old tires, and other containers. In warm weather the larvae may reach the **pupal** stage in less than a week. The mosquito remains in the pupal stage for a few days before emerging as a winged **adult**.

Adult male and female mosquitoes feed on plant juices for energy. Males remain close to their breeding site while females will search for a blood meal. Only the female mosquito needs a blood meal, to develop eggs. Depending on the species of mosquito, the female can fly a distance of one to five miles.

REMEMBER: The best way to control mosquitoes is still to get rid of standing water on your property. And, make sure you follow all label instructions carefully if you use Bti at home.

HOMEOWNERS, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

1. The best way to manage mosquitoes is to eliminate stagnant or standing water where mosquitoes can lay eggs.



PERSONAL PROTECTION AGAINST MOSQUITOES

1. Avoid mosquito-breeding areas during peak periods of activity, which are at dawn and dusk. Some mosquitoes may be active all day.
2. Repair all poorly fitting windows and doors.
3. Check door and window screens; repair as needed.
4. Keep car windows closed and garage doors closed at night.
5. Keep shrubs and grass trimmed.
6. Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks and closed-toe shoes if outside during peak hours.
7. Individuals may use repellents on exposed skin and clothing. Follow the label directions carefully.



REPELLENTS

1. Repellents may reduce mosquito bites. When used improperly, repellents may cause adverse health effects. Always read and follow label directions carefully. Do not apply to face. Do not apply to hands of children. Never allow children to apply repellents. Repellents should not be applied to children under 3 years old. Wash treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
2. Beware of gimmicks. Many devices are sold that claim to repel or kill mosquitoes. Most of these devices are not effective and should be researched before buying. Insect light electrocuters (bug zappers) or sound devices do not work in reducing mosquitoes.
3. State DEP and county mosquito control professionals have been using Bti, a naturally occurring bacteria, to kill mosquito larvae for years. This material is now becoming widely available for you to buy and use yourself at home. Bti can be purchased in small, donut-shaped form, often called “mosquito dunks”, which are useful in small areas of standing water. Bti can be purchased in many lawn and garden, outdoor supply, and home improvement stores. The great thing about this bacteria is that it kills only mosquito and black fly larvae. It is not harmful to people, pets, aquatic life or plants.

West Nile Virus



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