

MOSQUITO & HEALTH COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Debbie Dill

On behalf of the Moquito & Health Committee, welcome to all new Spring Shadows Residents!

Spring is upon us and this year, along with the rest of our nation and the world, we have been introduced to the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) and resulting pandemic. In the recent months, our lives have been disrupted and changed by the Social Distancing and Stay at Home orders issued by federal, state and local authorities in order to limit the numbers of people exposed to the disease. As this is a novel (“new virus”), we do not have immunity to the virus and we are in a constant state of learning new information about it. Because there is so much yet to be learned, I do not want to mislead you with incorrect information so it is my recommendation that you stay informed for your safety and the safety of your family by getting the latest updates from your favorite news outlets or from the experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (www.cdc.gov) or the COVID-19 information link on the Harris County Public Health webpage (www.hcphtx.org). You should also stay updated and informed concerning the latest recommendations and/or orders implemented by our government officials (Lina Hidalgo, County Judge of Harris County, TX; Houston’s Mayor Sylvester Turner, the Governor Abbott of Texas and President Trump and his task force). Those orders have been reported by your favorite local and national news outlets with regular updates.

As for the 2020 Mosquito season, it too is upon us, and mosquitos may carry various diseases. Spring Shadows has implemented a 2-part control program that targets mosquitos in both their larval and adult stages. We have contracted with a pest control service which began services in early April and will continue through October, with the option of extending the service another month if necessary. The first part is a larvicide control program which consists of dunks in the neighborhood’s 206 storm drains and the second part targets the adult mosquitos with a weekly truck-based chemical fogging at night which covers the streets. If the weather does not permit the service, the provider will service our neighborhood the next time the provider has available.

You are responsible for your backyard protection. There are consumer products that may help which one find on the shelves of your

local home improvement or hardware stores. Some that have been recommended by our neighbors are:

- Dunks—May be placed in standing water on your property to interrupt the mosquito life cycle;
- Traps—Attracts and kills mosquitos and other flying insects without chemicals; and
- Spartan Eradicators—Water solution designed to attract and kill mosquitos.

You may also choose to hire a pest control service to combat mosquitos in your backyard. Some of the services they provide are automatic mister installation, backpack chemical fogging, and natural treatment options. I am not endorsing any particular service personally but these were also suggested by some of our neighbors. r

Of course, there are steps each of us can take to prevent mosquitos in both our back and front yards. Please regularly inspect your property for standing water which mosquitos need to lay their eggs. Please empty, scrub, turn over, cover or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, planter saucers, toys, pools, birdbaths, flower pots or trash containers. Don't forget to check under hedges and foliage where rain water pools.

***Repel:** Remember to use an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – registered insect repellent with one of the following active ingredients: DEET, Picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus or 2-undecanone.

- Reapply insect repellent every few hours, depending on product and strength you choose.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.
- Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months of age. Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD) on children under 3 years of age.
- Use as directed on product label and follow cautionary and warning instructions on the label.

*Prevention and repellent information copied from the CDC's "Mosquito Bite Prevention" brochure (us.pdf)

Take care, be well and have a safe summer/year!