

# DRAGON MOSQUITO CONTROL, Inc.

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Have you noticed fewer mosquitoes this fall? That is one of the few beneficial side-effects of the drought. Most other impacts are devastating, such as loss of plants and wildlife particularly those creatures that depend on wetlands for their survival. As we change our habits to preserve water by not watering our lawns or washing our cars, we should think of ways to help our backyard birds and critters. I have several birdbaths in my yard which I replenish frequently to provide fresh water for birds and small mammals. I'm mindful of the importance to change the water frequently to prevent mosquito development. Any container holding water for a few days provides a place for mosquitoes to breed, particularly those species that carry West Nile Virus.

Fewer mosquitoes mean less opportunity for disease outbreaks. This season, there have been two batches of West Nile Virus mosquitoes and no EEE in New Hampshire. One batch of mosquitoes was from Manchester and one from Nashua. As the drought continues, daylight hours diminish and temperatures cool, the mosquitoes are running out of time. No one is complaining about a lack of threat from mosquito-borne disease. We've all had more than our share of challenges this year.

Drought has an effect on salt marsh mosquitoes. It facilitates mosquito breeding by allowing the marsh to dry out between floods, a necessary step in the mosquito lifecycle. Lack of rain coupled with multiple flood tides each month provides ample opportunity for salt marsh mosquitoes to hatch. Our crews spend many weeks applying a *Bacillus* bacterium to stop the four species of salt marsh mosquitoes from becoming winged adults.

Tick populations suffer temporarily during a drought. It's the second beneficial side-effect of no rain. Few or no ticks means less Lyme disease, as well as less Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis, Powassan Virus. Unfortunately, the list of tick diseases is growing as more types of ticks are found in our region bringing more types of diseases with them.

Fall is the perfect time to get outside to enjoy the beautiful foliage, go apple picking or explore the local trails in your town forest. As we find any excuse to get out of the house, it's nice knowing there's less concern for mosquito or tick disease right now. It's best to stay informed should that situation change. Just in case, keep your repellent handy.

Respectfully submitted,  
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