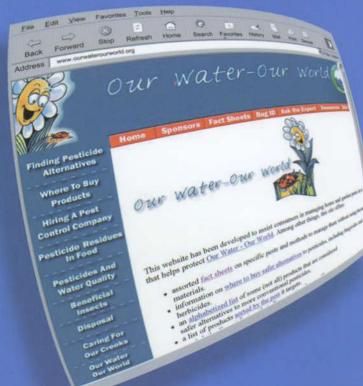
## Got Bugs? Get Answers!





Choose less toxic products for a healthy home and garden

visit www.ourwaterourworld.org



Look for this symbol before you buy

"Our Water Our World" is a partnership between nurseries, hardware stores and public agencies to raise awareness of less toxic ways to manage pests to prevent pesticide runoff into the streams, creeks and waterways. This year it has played a very active role in mosquito prevention.

2005...West Nile Virus (WNV), a mosquito borne disease, had found it's way into the state the year before and was expected to surge this year. The extent would be based on the amount of rainfall. 2005...a year with a record of the highest rainfall totals in over 40 years and late season rains to cap it off. The ideal environment for the spread of WNV was now in place. Indeed, mosquito populations reached levels never before recorded in the history of California.

The wealthier, more populated counties were planning strategies to contain the problem. The three most effective processes were to educate the public, remove the standing water, which is where mosquitoes breed, and to directly control the spread of the disease primarily through the use of larvacides, to prevent the mosquitoes from reaching maturity.

However, some less-populated counties like Mendocino, do not have a Mosquito Abatement program. This is a 'win' story about what a community can do, even with minimal resources, if they come together. It all began when I met with Mike Sweeney from Mendocino Solid Waste Authority, the county coordinator for the Our Water Our World to discuss what the community was going to do to create an Anti-West Nile Virus Campaign.

Mike Sweeney first contacted Tony Linegar, assistant Agricultural Commissioner, and John Rogers Director of Environmental Health to discuss forming a West Nile Taskforce. Within one week, the taskforce was created. A protocol was established and a sheet was developed to direct the public on using appropriate means to control the spread of West Nile Virus.

An additional sheet was created that listed less toxic products, as found on the Our Water Our World Mosquito Fact Sheet. Tony Linegar created the list of products specified for the County and arranged to have them printed for distribution to the whole community.





Meanwhile, John Rogers of the Doenlist the support of the stores of the Doenlist the support of the stores of the support of the stores of the support of the stores of the Doenlist the support of the stores of the Doenlist the support of the stores of the Doenlist the support of the stores of th

Meanwhile, John Rogers of the Dept. of Health and I worked to enlist the support of the stores in the area. 13 Mendocino County Nurseries and Hardware stores from the Our Water Our World program joined in this effort. They realized the need for community awareness and a plan that would reduce mosquito populations without polluting streams and creeks with pesticide runoff. John sent a letter encouraging the stores to bring in the less toxic products for their communities to use to fight West Nile Virus. A great public/private partnership was shaping up and the people and the natural resources of Mendocino County were the beneficiaries. contacted several stores considered to be good prospects to carry mosquito fish for use in their local areas. Anderson Valley Feed in Philo, and Growing Concern in Gualala quickly offered to build holding ponds for the fish, joining existing fish supplier Spare Time Supply in Willits. Mosquito fish are an excellent control for mosquito larvae in ponds and water gardens...they can consume up to 500 mosquito larvae per day.

I also worked with the stores to promote the local campaign and to encourage them to bring additional products into their inventories such as larvacides and insect repellants. Marten Van Royen, L&L's rep for Mendocino County, played a critical role making sure the stores accessed the products they needed.

Most of the stores offered to make off-shelf displays for the less toxic products. The sense of urgency and pride in their community sped things along quickly. In the third week of the local campaign, I distributed local West Nile Literature and additional mosquito fact sheets for their displays. I was overwhelmed at the energy and caring that the stores exhibited. Many stores made hand painted signs alerting the public to dump the standing water on their properties.

At Spare Time Supply in Willits, a massive display

was made, taking up most of the retail sales area. The manager, Diana, made a painting of a mosquito that was 3 feet across. That certainly grabbed the attention of the customers! At Mendo Mill, Rayana, Garden Department Manager made a large endcap with all types of home repair materials to keep mosquitoes out and porch lights designed to deter mosquitoes. She also helped prepare a checklist for West Nile Prevention that reminded people to help their elderly neighbors to check their yards for standing water. The elderly are most susceptible to more serious effects of West Nile Virus.

At Friedman Bros. Home Improvement in Ukiah, Jason the Garden Department Manager, made a large display of Mosquito Dunks at the entry to the garden department and laminated the letter from the Dept of Health for all to see.

Shiela and Sherry at North Star Nursery made sure to display the additional materials near the register so no one would miss seeing the important message from the County. In Fort Bragg, Rossi's Ace, Hare Creek Nursery, and Heartwood Nursery brought in and displayed new less toxic products for the fight against WNV. Everyone was preparing to protect their community.

The campaign in Mendocino County still goes on as we progress into the fall. It has been a heartwarming experience and evidence that committed individuals in the community, business, and government can join together to make a difference. You can make a difference in your community. Start in your own yard and help those in your neighborhood who cannot do the work themselves.

Products used in West Nile Prevention Campaign: Summitt Mosquito Dunks, Summitt Mosquito Bits, Microbelift, Carefree Mosquito Free Water, Mosquito Repellents.

