Mosquito Control Around The Home
Chris Tyson, Extension Agent

With the heavy rains in our area in the last month, and the recent warming trend, the mosquito population has *EXPLODED* in Worth County! Our office has received numerous calls about mosquito control, and I know the county has been working extra hours spraying along the roads for mosquitoes. While it is impossible to eliminate all mosquitoes around your house, this information can help control them and make the area outside your home more enjoyable. Don’t make the area around your home a safe haven for mosquitoes!

**Standing Water = Mosquitoes**

Standing water is the main culprit when it comes to promoting mosquito breeding. Still or stagnant water less than an inch deep will support mosquito growth. They can breed in bird baths, empty cans or plastic drink bottles, tires, tree holes, saucers under potted plants, blocked drains and gutters, or any other place that will hold water for a week or more (mosquitoes need about 7 days to complete their life cycle from egg to adult). Mosquitoes generally don’t breed in water that is moving, and farm ponds with fish in them are not usually big breeding grounds, since fish like bream eat mosquito eggs. So look around your home, and eliminate as many sources of standing water as possible. This will cut down on mosquito eggs hatching into adults. If you have a body of water that can’t be permanently drained, such as bird baths or other landscape water features, use “Mosquito Dunks” to control the mosquito eggs in these places. Most of these products will last for several weeks and are safe to use around pets and animals.

**Other Areas Around the Home**

Eliminating standing water around the home is only half the battle. This will cut down on mosquito eggs hatching around your house, but adult mosquitoes from other areas can fly in on the breeze from *MILES* away. Don’t make your yard a safe haven for skeeters. Mosquitoes will hide and rest in tall grass, shrubbery, and any other dark, shaded areas. Keep your yard mowed and shrubbery trimmed up. In addition to this, you can use an insecticide on your lawn, shrubbery, and perimeter areas of your house that is labeled to kill mosquitoes. Products containing the active ingredient carbaryl (Sevin), bifenthrin (Ortho Bug-B-Gon Max Lawn and Garden Insect Killer), or malathion can be used every 1 to 2 weeks to kill mosquitoes that land in these areas. In the areas that you spray, be sure to wet the surfaces uniformly, carefully treating vegetation by trying to coat bottom surfaces of leaves and getting spray into the canopy. For a quick but temporary solution, aerosol foggers can be used as well as electric, propane, and gas powered foggers. These can be found at home and garden stores. As when using any pesticide, be sure to read the label to make sure you use it in a safe and appropriate way and use it only as labeled. Call me if you have any questions at 776-8216, and good luck!