



# Clean Swimming Pools Are Essential for Staying Mosquito-Free

Unmaintained swimming pools can be a significant risk to public health. Why? If swimming pools are not regularly cleaned and maintained, a single swimming pool can produce millions of mosquitoes capable of transmitting West Nile virus.

Mosquitoes need standing water to complete their life cycle, and if a pool is not cleaned regularly, it can become a major source of disease-spreading mosquitoes.

Residents are responsible for maintaining their swimming pools and making sure they don't produce mosquitoes. Regular pool maintenance includes:

- Keeping water clean, clear, and recirculating
- Regularly chlorinating and testing the pool to maintain disinfection levels
- Maintaining proper pH levels (between 7.2 and 7.8)
- Running the pool filter on a regular basis as required (4-8 hours/day)
- Keeping filters clean and the pump in good condition
- Skimming the pool surface and vacuuming/brushing the walls weekly
- Keeping pool covers in good condition and appropriately sized for the pool
- Not allowing water to stay on the surface of pool covers

Regular maintenance is the best way to prevent a mosquito problem in a pool. If a pool is not maintained, controlling mosquitoes can become a year-round challenge, but fortunately there are solutions that are free or low-cost to fix or prevent a larger mosquito problem.



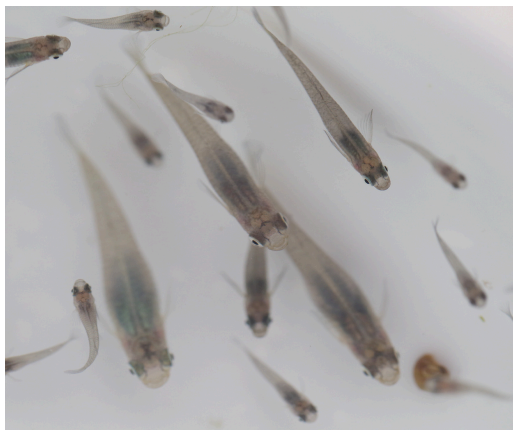
*Examples of green pools and wet pool covers, both of which can produce mosquitoes*

## Treatment Options for Unmaintained Swimming Pools

**Short-Term Pesticide Treatment:** Pesticide treatments can be a short-term solution for a pool that is not functioning. Local mosquito and vector control districts have a variety of treatment options available based on the severity of the mosquito situation.

**Mosquitofish:** Mosquitofish are surface feeding minnows from North America that are used around the world to control mosquitoes by eating mosquito larvae in standing water. These fish are a low-maintenance, long-term treatment strategy that work well in artificial bodies of water that are not chemically treated, such as unmaintained swimming pools. If a local mosquito control district is offering mosquitofish as a control method, they can provide an initial assessment of the unmaintained pool and may deliver the fish, free of charge.

**Drain the Pool:** Another option to limit mosquito development is to drain a pool and keep it dry while not in use. If there is no standing water, mosquitoes cannot complete their life cycle. Before draining a pool, residents should make sure that this is the right option for their property, as draining some pools can cause structural damage.



*Mosquitofish can be added to an unmaintained pool*



*A mosquito control technician adds bacteria that kills mosquito larvae*

Local mosquito and vector control districts are the best resources to learn about treatment options for swimming pools and how to prevent a mosquito problem. In severe cases, if a local mosquito and vector control district cannot access an unmaintained pool to make appropriate treatments, districts can fine the resident and access the pool without resident permission according to the California Health and Safety Code.

