

Vector Control Program

The City of Long Beach, Department of Health and Human Services, Vector Control Program is responsible for the control and elimination of insects and rodents that can transmit diseases, such as encephalitis, rabies and plague. The program also provides public education on controlling insects, rodents and other vermin.

Program services include:

- ✦ Africanized Honey Bee control and eradication
- ✦ Mosquito surveillance and abatement
- ✦ Red Fire Ant control
- ✦ Rodent control, and
- ✦ Educating private property owners on controlling insects, rodents and other vermin

What are vectors?

Insects and animals that can cause diseases or discomfort to humans including:

- ✦ Bees, flies, fleas
- ✦ Mosquitoes
- ✦ Rats
- ✦ Red imported fire ants, and
- ✦ Other stinging insects



Steps you can take to prevent infestation:

Bees

Check window screens for large openings. Routinely empty your trash and place a cover on the container. Trim trees and check tree hollows for bee hives.

Mosquitoes

Change pet water bowls often. Clean clogged roof gutters once a year. Clean or chlorinate swimming pools that are not being used. Dispose of tin cans, discarded tires, plastic containers. Drain or fill low spots in the ground. Drill holes in the bottom of outdoor recycling containers to prevent moisture from collecting. Eliminate standing water.

Red Imported Fire Ants

Avoid moving soil, potted plants from your property. Do not stack firewood, lumber or tires. Remove exposed food sources that may attract these insects. Use bait or insecticides to control fire ants or call your local pest control company.

Rodents

Do not store surplus garbage in cardboard; plastic or paper bags. Search for small holes or openings around the home and stuff with steel wool, cover with sheet metal, or fill with plastic. Store food in rodent-proof glass or metal containers. Use baits or rodenticides. Wash out garbage cans periodically and never leave them open at night.

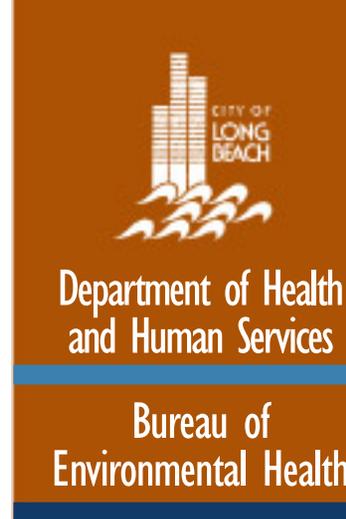
Service Numbers

Vector Control Program	(562) 570-4132*
Africanized Honey Bee Information Line	(562) 570-4282*
Africanized Honey Bee Hotline	(800) 233-9279**
Red Imported Fire Ant Hotline	(800) 233-9279**

*Office Hours: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday

**Available 24 hours a day

City of Long Beach
Department of Health and Human Services
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
2525 Grand Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90815
(562) 570-4132
<http://www.ci.long-beach.ca.us/health>



Working Together

To Serve



Bees

Bees are a very common and beneficial group of insects. However, bees can be dangerous when provoked, especially the Africanized Honey Bees (AHBs). AHBs are closely related to European Honey Bees. The two types of bees look the same and their behavior is similar in many ways. Neither is likely to sting when gathering nectar and pollen from flowers, but both will sting in defense if provoked. However, AHBs are more aggressive, are likely to defend a greater area around their hive, and respond faster and in greater numbers.

There are several potential bee nesting sites around the home including:

Abandoned vehicles	Attics
Piles of rocks	Porches
Sheds	Trash cans
Tree hollows	Utility boxes

General precautions that should be followed to avoid an encounter with bees include:

- ☀ Being alert when participating in outdoor activities
- ☀ Listening for buzzing sounds indicating a nest or swarm of bees nearby
- ☀ Staying away from all honey bee swarms and colonies
- ☀ Examining work areas before using lawn mowers, weed cutters and other power equipment
- ☀ Checking for bee swarms before tying up your pets outdoors

If bees are encountered:

- ☀ Get away as quickly as possible and find shelter in a building or car
- ☀ Protect face and eyes while running away
- ☀ Do not swat at bees
- ☀ Do not take refuge in bushes or underwater, since bees will stay nearby and wait for you



Contact the Fire Department at 911 to report active bee swarms/hives or multiple stinging incidents. The Fire Department will then contact Vector Control, who will send a Vector Control Specialist to the reported location of the bee swarm or hive. After evaluating the situation, the Vector Control Specialist will take the appropriate action to eradicate the swarm/hive. However, if the swarm/hive is attached to or within a structure, the property owner or occupant will be referred to a professional beekeeper.

Samples of eradicated bees are collected and submitted to the Health Department Laboratory for testing to determine if the bees are Africanized Honey Bees.

To request a brochure on the AHBs, contact the Health Department at (562) 570-4132.

Mosquito Surveillance and Abatement

Mosquitos can transmit many illnesses to humans. However, in the United States, mosquito-borne diseases are limited to Eastern Equine Encephalitis, St. Louis Encephalitis and West Nile Encephalitis. The most common, St. Louis Encephalitis, occurs on an average of 200 cases annually. Symptoms of these diseases range from the less serious, fever, headache and drowsiness, to brain inflammation and meningitis. The symptoms can be more severe in the elderly, infants, and immuno-compromised people. Mosquito abatement and control plays an important part in limiting the occurrence of mosquito borne disease.

Mosquito breeding season is from May through October. Since these insects need water to complete their life cycle, they are most active in and around stagnant water. Department of Health and Human Services' staff provides mosquito surveillance on a weekly basis by monitoring potential breeding sites for mosquito habitation such as ditches, canals, ponds and neighborhood gutters. Once mosquito habitation is identified, staff applies appropriate control measures.



Red Imported Fire Ants

Fire ants require water to survive and build nests anywhere they can find moisture. Their nests can be found near any body of water and also in lawns, gardens, woodpiles, fields and parks. They will also invade compost piles and mulched flowerbeds, seeking warmth and moisture.

Fire ants swarm aggressively within a matter of seconds and inflict painful stings when their nest is disturbed. Each sting itches and burns and leaves a blister-like sore that can become infected if not treated properly. Fire ants pose more of a threat to small children, the elderly, pets and wildlife.

Vector Control Staff will respond to complaints and apply appropriate control measures to treat affected areas. Incidents are also reported to the State Agricultural Commissioner, Weights and Measures Department to confirm the positive identification and documentation of the Red Imported Fire Ants.

Rodent Control

Rodents are more than a nuisance, they can spread disease, damage structures and contaminate food. They can also transmit a number of serious diseases, including Arenavirus infection, Hantavirus, Plague and Typhus. To maintain rodent control, Vector Control staff routinely applies treatment to public properties such as shorelines, harbors, and parks.

For rodent control on private property, the Vector Control Program offers rodent bait to the public. Rodent bait can be obtained in person from the Health Department, 2525 Grand Ave., Room 220. However, if a rodent infestation in a residential area is particularly severe, staff will respond and abate the problem.

To check for the presence of rodents, look for gnawing marks on wood, plastic, metal and food packaging; rodent droppings and urine stains; and tail and footprint marks in dust.

