

All of our programs and services are funded by tax dollars, so there is no charge!

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

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DISTRICT SERVICES

- **Mosquitoes** – Our state-certified technicians and inspectors provide free inspection and advice on control methods to county residents upon request. At the time of inspection, residents must provide a mosquito sample because identifying the type of mosquito is key to finding the source of production. There are 23 different species of mosquitoes in Contra Costa County. Each one differs in behavior, habitat, ability to transmit disease and tendency to bite humans.
- **Mosquitofish** – Free for stocking contained water on private property. Examples include ponds, pools, water features and horse troughs. Each mosquitofish can eat up to 500 mosquito larvae per day.
- **Rats & Mice** – County homeowners and business owners can request a site visit from a state-certified vertebrate technician or inspector and receive advice on prevention and control. The homeowner or business owner will also receive a detailed report.
- **Skunks** – The District will provide property inspections and give advice to property owners on exclusion, habitat modifications and the best methods to discourage skunks from taking residence on the property. Upon the inspection, if a skunk den is verified by the inspector the District shall warrant a trap for use.
- **Yellowjackets** – Considered beneficial insects, yellowjackets pollinate plants and eat pest insects and flies. They are also considered to be a vector with their ability to sting repeatedly; their venom is extremely dangerous to those who are allergic. There are four species in Contra Costa County, two of which nest aerially, and two that nest underground. The District provides extermination of ground-nesting yellowjacket nests since this species is far more aggressive than aerial-nesting yellowjackets.
- **Ticks and Lyme Disease Testing** – County residents can bring or mail a tick for identification. Of the three species of ticks in Contra Costa County, the Western black-legged tick is a known carrier and transmitter of Lyme disease.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

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- **Mosquitoes** – Our mosquito control program is based on the principle of integrated pest management (IPM). It is most effective to control the larval stages of mosquitoes since they are concentrated in a smaller area and cannot fly away. Larval control is achieved through source reduction (elimination of standing water), and through the use of safe, effective biological and chemical control methods chosen specifically to minimize their impact on the environment. Biological control agents include mosquitofish, which feed on the larvae, and natural bacterial insecticides like BTI. Chemical control agents include insect growth regulators and larvicidal oils. Fogging for adult mosquitoes can occur as part of control efforts, but only when necessary and after surveillance and testing indicates an above-normal threshold of potential for disease transmission or high numbers of nuisance mosquitoes. Materials used by the District are applied by trained and state-certified technicians and registered with the Environmental Protection Agency.
- **Mosquitofish** – As a natural predator of mosquito larvae, these fish are routinely stocked by technicians to control larval populations throughout the County. By law, only vector control technicians can place fish in water sources other than those located on private property. Some common 'sources' or sites where these fish are stocked include; artificial lakes, irrigation ditches, storm channels, and natural industrial ponds. To avoid competition with sensitive native amphibian and fish species, we do not stock mosquitofish in habitats where such species are known to be present. More than 1 million of these fish are produced each year at the District's mosquitofish production facility.
- **Rats & Mice** – The District provides rat prevention and control for sewers, creeks and marinas and assists cities, parks, etc. with rat control in public areas. The District does not trap nor bait rats and mice in or around private homes. Homeowners with rats and mice problems can obtain advice and request a site visit from one of our expert technicians to assist them in rat and mouse prevention and control.
- **Skunks** – The District maintains a rabies risk reduction program. Property inspection and advice are given to property owners on exclusion, habitat modifications, and the best methods to discourage skunks from taking residence on the property. Upon the inspection, if a skunk den is verified by the inspector the District shall warrant a trap for use.
- **Yellowjackets** – The District provides a control program for ground-nesting yellowjackets only. Residents who locate yellowjacket nests in trees or structures should contact a licensed structural pest control company.
- **Ticks and Lyme Disease Testing** – The District conducts annual surveillance for the Western black-legged tick and the bacteria that causes Lyme disease.