



Fight the Bite

Stakeholder Communications toolkit

Background

The Department of Health's Fight the Bite (FTB) campaign aims to raise awareness of mosquito-borne diseases in Western Australia (WA), along with simple ways people can avoid infection and reduce mosquito breeding around their home/holiday accommodation.

In WA, prevention is the only way to avoid being infected with Ross River virus (RRV), Barmah Forest virus (BFV), Kunjin disease and the potentially fatal Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE).

There is a vaccine for Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV), but it is still best to avoid mosquito bites to ensure you don't get infected with any of the other mosquito-borne diseases. You can do this in three simple ways:

- 1) **Cover up** in long, light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing.
- 2) Apply an effective mosquito **repellent**.
- 3) **Clean up** by removing, emptying or covering water-holding containers.



Campaign materials

This toolkit includes links to posters, brochures, Youtube interviews and social media graphics with suggested messaging for you to share to help the Department of Health reach our intended target audiences. Collectively, these can be found on the [Fight the Bite Campaign webpage](#).

Please contact Medical.Entomology@health.wa.gov.au if you need alternative formats or versions based on the unique needs of your audience.

Thank you for your support.

Ideas on how to incorporate Fight the Bite

Incorporate the Fight the Bite campaign into a local environmental health promotion communication plan to educate individuals on simple ways to prevent being bitten and reduce mosquito breeding around their home/holiday accommodation. This may include:

- Posting a series of Fight the Bite messages on social media including Facebook and Instagram throughout summer and link to the [HealthyWA website](#).
- Sharing Fight the Bite [campaign interviews](#) with individuals impacted by mosquitoes-borne disease.
- Including an annual article on Fight the Bite in the community news.
- Issuing a local media statement in peak seasons raising awareness of Fight the Bite campaign messaging.
- Displaying brochures and campaign materials at local visitor's centre, library, recreational centre, sports centre and other suitable local government venues. You may request these from [Medical Entomology](#).
- Disseminating Fight the Bite brochures and campaign material to residents with annual rate notices.
- Develop and maintain a Fight the Bite webpage on the council webpage that links to the Department of Health HealthyWA website.
- Identify suitable community events to include a Fight the Bite display at with a staff member available to answer queries on mosquito management and discuss strategies used by the local government to minimise mosquito breeding.
- Promoting and participating in Fight the Bite's free [Community Repellent Dispenser Initiative](#) and encourage community organisations to apply. to eligible organisations and encourage community members to apply.
- Install permanent Fight the Bite branded (or otherwise) signage in high-risk areas for mosquito activity.
- Display Fight the Bite messaging on digital signage, often available along main roads in many regional towns or at regional airports.
- Promote surveillance activities and mosquito management strategies used by the local government to minimise mosquito breeding on social media.
- Utilise Contiguous Local Authorities Group (CLAG) funding to increase engagement with Fight the Bite, if your local government is part of a registered CLAG with the Department of Health.

Examples of Local Government communication efforts

Example 1: Interactive Fight the Bite stalls at community events

The City of Busselton and Shire of Capel hosted an interactive Fight the Bite stall at the Busselton Caravan and Camping Show, which attracted a crowd of over 8,000 people. Visitors learnt about bite prevention strategies, effective repellents and Local Government control activities. Children put their skills to the test dipping for fake larvae and identifying mosquitoes.

Many local governments host stalls at community events and borrow Fight the Bite tablecloths, wing banners and pull-up conference style banners to support their efforts. When children are engaged, it draws in parents and provides an opportunity for a chat. Local governments have been very creative in the activities provided for kids, including badge making, rock painting, colouring in, building mosquitoes out of pipe-cleaners.



Example 2: Fight the Bite school program and incursions

The Shire of Ashburton developed a Fight the Bite school program, which sees Shire staff visit local schools to promote awareness of mosquitoes, their lifecycle, the viruses they carry and simple ways to prevent being bitten. The students take a walk through the school to see where mosquitoes like to breed. They also set a mosquito trap on site and look at the mosquitoes they catch under a microscope the next day, identifying different types (species) of mosquitoes and learning how to tell males from females. Students are then provided with a Fight the Bite colouring tote bag with information in it to take home to their parents.



Example 3: Local government signage in high-risk areas

Many local governments have installed permanent signage in high-risk areas for mosquitoes and mosquito-borne virus activity. These may be in the form of a metal or digital sign. Although there is an initial outlay required, permanent signage is a useful way of raising community awareness at the appropriate time/place, without further resourcing required.

In most cases, local governments work in collaboration with the Department of Health's Medical Entomology and Communication teams, to produce the artwork for the signage. The local government then has the sign produced and installed.



Example 4: Unpaid social media campaign

Many local governments utilise social media tiles developed by the Department of Health to engage with the community on mosquito related topics. Whilst not an exhaustive list, some ideas for social media posts include:

- alerting the general public when there is a current public health risk
- raising awareness of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases
- educating the community on how they can assist in reducing mosquito breeding
- educating the community on the LG's mosquito management activities
- promoting the Community Repellent Dispenser Initiative (eligible jurisdictions)

Community Repellent Dispenser Initiative

Personal insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), are an effective way of preventing mosquito bites.

Local government is encouraged to promote the Department's free [Repellent Dispenser Initiative](#) to eligible community organisations to make insect repellent readily accessible to the public, to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease.

Ordering repellent dispensers

A limited number of repellent dispensers are available, free of charge, to eligible community groups/organisations in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Gascoyne regions to participate in this important Fight the Bite initiative.

Eligible groups/organisations are encouraged to apply for dispensers by completing the application form on the [Department's website](#). Dispensers will be sent out free of charge, with an initial supply of repellent.

Eligible organisations in the above specified regions include, but are not limited to:

- Sporting clubs
- Community groups
- Outdoor cinemas
- Caravan parks.

The Department will be rolling the initiative out to community organisations, state-wide, in 2026. Further information will be provided in due course.

Local governments who wish to purchase their own repellent dispensers to support the initiative can contact DOH.RepellentStationOrder@health.wa.gov.au.



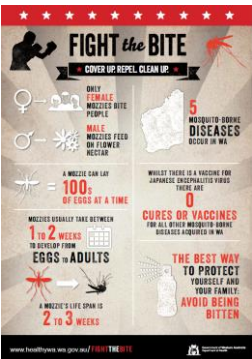
Brochures

*Hard copies can be requested from <mailto:Medical.entomology@health.wa.gov.au>

	• Fight the Bite: At Home
	• Fight the Bite: On Holiday in Australia
	• Fight the Bite: On Holiday Overseas
	• A Management Guide for General Practitioners and Patients
	• Fight the Bite: March flies Contact the Department of Health for hard copies or a digital copy.

Posters

*Hard copies can be requested from <mailto:Medical.entomology@health.wa.gov.au>

 A general 'Fight the Bite' poster featuring a silhouette of a person fighting a mosquito. It includes the slogan 'PROTECT YOURSELF' and 'DISEASE-CARRYING MOSQUITOES'. At the bottom, it lists three actions: 'COVER UP', 'REPEL', and 'CLEAN UP', each with an icon and brief instructions.	• Fight the Bite Poster: General
 An infographic titled 'FIGHT the BITE' with the slogan 'COVER UP. REPEL. CLEAN UP.' It provides statistics and facts about mosquitoes, such as 'ONLY FEMALE MOSQUITOES BITE PEOPLE', 'MILL MOSQUITOES FEED ON FLOWER MOSQUITO', and 'A MOSQUITO CAN LAY 100 OF EGGS AT A TIME'. It also mentions '5 MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASES OCCUR IN WA' and '0 CURES OR VACCINES FOR ALL MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASES PREVALENT IN WA'. The best way to protect is 'AVOID BEING BITTEN'.	• Fight the Bite infographic Contact the Department of Health for digital copy.
 An infographic titled 'FIGHT the BITE' with the slogan 'COVER UP. REPEL. CLEAN UP.' It focuses on MVE (Murray Valley Encephalitis) in the Kimberley region. It lists early symptoms of MVE: HEADACHE, FEVER, DROWSY, MUSCLE STIFFNESS, NAUSEA, and CONFUSION. It states that MVE is potentially fatal, with encephalitis meaning swelling of the brain, leading to seizures, coma, and paralysis. The best way to protect is 'AVOID BEING BITTEN'.	• MVE Infographic: Kimberley • MVE Infographic: Pilbara
 A poster titled 'FIGHT the BITE' with the subtitle 'REPELLENT STATION'. It shows a bottle of repellent and provides instructions on how to apply it: 'APPLY EVENLY TO ALL AREAS OF EXPOSED SKIN', 'DO NOT APPLY REPELLENT SPARINGLY', and 'AVOID THE MOUTH AND EYES'. It also lists three actions: 'COVER UP', 'REPEL', and 'CLEAN UP'.	• Repellent application guidance to support dispenser initiative. Contact Department of Health for hard copies or a digital copy of poster

	• A4 Poster – Wear long, loose-fitting clothing and use insect repellent • A4 Poster – Protect yourself against mosquitoes while camping
	• A4 Poster – Remove the water and containers mosquito breed in • A4 Poster – Keep your house mosquito free: Fans
	• Combined A3 Poster for regional communities
	• A4 Poster: Mosquito hazards after flooding (*This is not a <i>Fight the Bite</i> resource but is a useful WA Health poster).

Social media

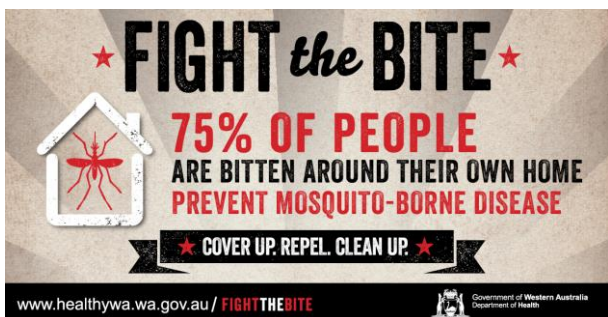
General Fight the Bite messaging



- [Fight the Bite: Protect yourself against disease-carrying mosquitoes](#)



- [Symptoms of Ross River virus](#)



- [75% of people are bitten around their own home](#)



- [Mozzies lay 100's of eggs at a time](#)



- [5 mosquito-borne diseases occur in WA](#)

Social tiles for use to encourage bite prevention



- [Cut your grass often and keep it short](#)



- Effective repellents to protect against mosquito-borne disease
- Contact the [Department of Health](#) for high resolution digital version of social tile)



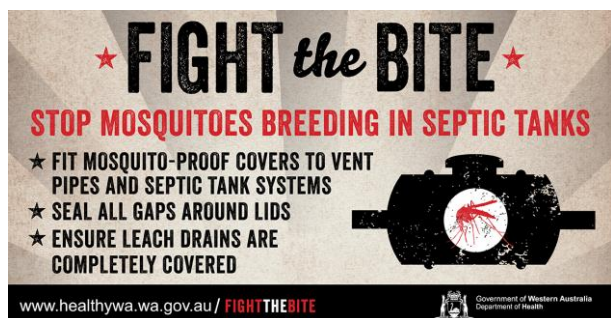
- [Firing up the BBQ? Don't welcome unwanted guests!](#)



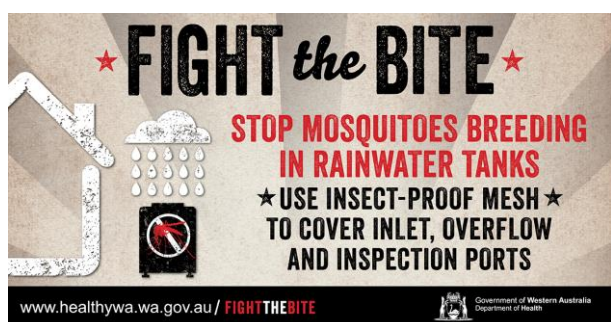
- [Stop mosquitoes breeding in your backyard](#)

 FIGHT the BITE DID YOU KNOW MOSQUITOES CAN TRANSMIT HEARTWORM? PROTECT YOUR PETS www.healthywa.wa.gov.au / FIGHTTHEBITE Government of Western Australia Department of Health	• Protect your pets
 FIGHT the BITE PEOPLE ARE COMMONLY BITTEN BY MOSQUITOES WHILE GARDENING COVER UP. REPEL. CLEAN UP. www.healthywa.wa.gov.au / FIGHTTHEBITE Government of Western Australia Department of Health	• People are commonly bitten by mosquitoes while gardening
 FIGHT the BITE HEADING OUT FISHING? DON'T CATCH MORE THAN YOU PLANNED TO! COVER UP AND APPLY REPELLENT www.healthywa.wa.gov.au / FIGHTTHEBITE Government of Western Australia Department of Health	• Heading out fishing? Don't catch more than you planned to!
 FIGHT the BITE EXERCISING OUTDOORS? DISEASE CARRYING MOSQUITOES ARE ON THE BITE! COVER UP AND APPLY REPELLENT www.healthywa.wa.gov.au / FIGHTTHEBITE Government of Western Australia Department of Health	• Exercising outdoors? Disease carrying mosquitoes are on the bite!
 FIGHT the BITE LOVE THE GOLF COURSE? DISEASE-CARRYING MOSQUITOES DO TOO! COVER UP AND APPLY REPELLENT www.healthywa.wa.gov.au / FIGHTTHEBITE Government of Western Australia Department of Health	• Love the golf course? Disease-carrying mosquitoes do too!

Targeted Social tiles for local government and business



- [Stop mosquitoes breeding in septic tanks](#)



- [Stop breeding in rainwater tanks](#)



- Stop mosquitoes breeding at your business
- (Contact the [Department of Health](#) for high resolution digital version of social tile)



- [Helicopter treatments taking place in the area](#)

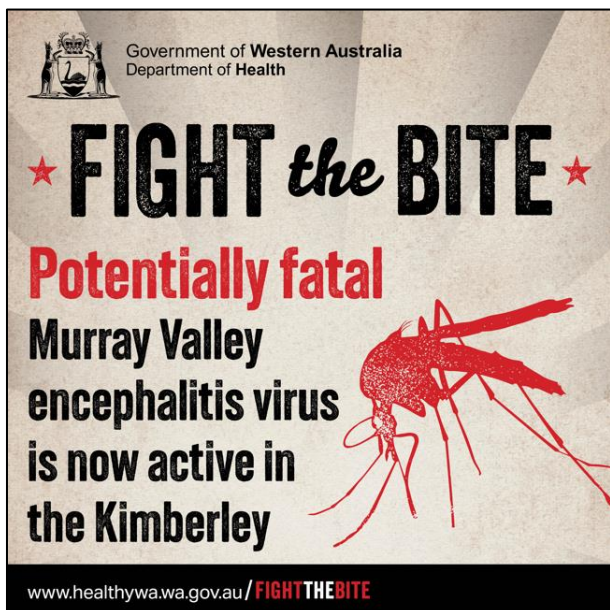


- [Fogging taking place in the area to control mosquitoes](#)

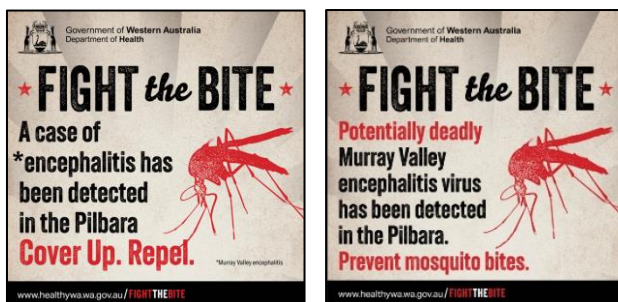
Social tiles for use when an active risk



- Serious, general MVE warning
- (Contact the [Department of Health](#) for high resolution digital version of social tile)



- MVE active in the Kimberley warning.
- (Contact the [Department of Health](#) for high resolution digital version of social tile)



- MVE case detected in the Pilbara
 - Potentially deadly MVE virus detected in the Pilbara
- (Contact the [Department of Health](#) for high resolution digital version of social tile)

Youtube videos

All Fight the Bite related videos can be accessed on the [Department's Youtube Channel](#).



Sonia Blackaby (Interview) – Husband passed away following MVE:

- [Full length interview](#) (3:02 mins)
- [Short interview 1](#) (30 sec)
- [Short interview 2](#) (31 sec)



Ilona (Interview) – Impacted by RRV

- [Long interview](#) (1:48 mins)
- [Short interview](#) (30 sec)



Marlaime (Interview) Impacted by RRV

- [Long interview](#) (90 sec)
- [Short interview](#) (30 sec)



Dr Mike Lindsay - Repellent application

- [Choosing the right repellent and what not to do!](#) (1:57 mins)
- [Mosquito repellent, short version](#) (30 secs)



- [Mosquito repellent application \(English\)](#)
- [Mosquito repellent application \(KRIOL\)](#)
- [Mosquito repellent application \(Walmajarri\)](#)



- [Fight the Bite screen advertisement](#) (30 secs)

Other ways to use Fight the Bite to raise awareness

The Department of Health has a range of Fight the Bite items that you can loan to support your campaign efforts. Alternatively, you may wish to purchase these.

	Tablecloth		Countertop display kits <i>(A small number can be provided free of charge).</i>
	Indoor pull-up conference banner		Repellent stands
	Outdoor wing banner		Community Repellent Dispenser Initiative (NEW)

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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