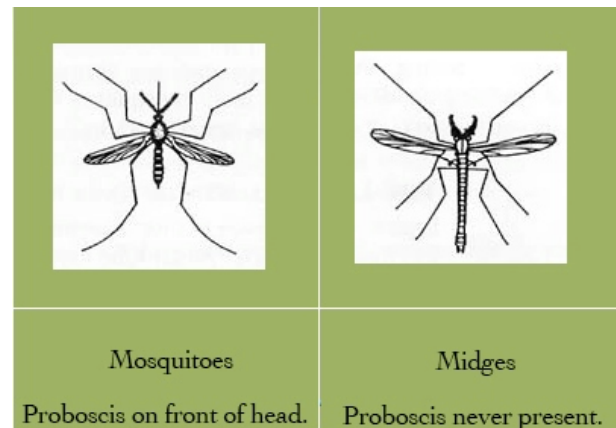


## Is it a mosquito or a midge

*The difference between a potential disease carrier and a nuisance is explained*

**RENO, NV** – As temperatures rise and mosquito activity increases, it is important that people know what type of insect they are seeing before they call local vector personnel to request relief. “We are getting a lot of calls from people reporting extremely high mosquito activity” said Phil Ulibarri, spokesperson for the Washoe County Health District. “But just because it looks like a mosquito doesn't mean it is. While most people have had an experience with mosquitos, not everyone knows the difference between mosquitos and their harmless counterparts midges.”

According to the Health District Vector Borne Disease Prevention Program, there are some noticeable differences between the two. Midges don't have a biting needle (proboscis) and because of this they cannot transmit diseases. Mosquitos do. Another difference is that midges fly in swarms that look like clouds. Mosquitoes don't always fly in swarms because mosquitos fly faster while midges fly more slowly, slower than an individual walks. “When people report being covered by a swarm of mosquitos, they probably just walked or passed through a cloud of midges. That can be annoying during outdoor activities because they may land on you or fly into your mouth, eyes and ears,” said Ulibarri.



Midges are often mistaken for mosquitos because of some other commonalities, too. Midges like most species of mosquitoes do not like direct sunlight; they prefer cool shady places such as front entry ways and covered back yard patios. However, certain mosquitos can be active in direct sun light. Midges and mosquitos are both attracted to lights in the evening which draws them to homes and businesses, so using lower wattage lights such as LED and/or yellow bug lights will greatly reduce the numbers of both insects around your home.

Washoe County residents may see more midges and mosquitos closer to homes due to the heavy precipitation and flooding we experienced this year. If you're not certain if you're seeing mosquitos or midges, please call the Washoe County Health District Vector Borne Diseases Program at 785-4599. Staff will be able to provide assistance in identification of these insects.



*Information provided by the Communications Program of the Washoe County Health District*

*About Washoe County Health District: The Washoe County District Board of Health, through the Washoe County Health District, has jurisdiction over all public health matters in Washoe County, Nevada. Its mission is to protect and enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Washoe County through health promotion, disease prevention, public health emergency preparedness, and environmental services. The Board of Health is composed of seven members, including two representatives each from Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County, and a physician licensed to practice medicine in Nevada.*

