

Florida county uses new mosquito traps

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Florida's St. Lucie County is counting on carbon dioxide combined with cow's breath to curtail a mosquito threat.

The gaseous mix is part of a trap manufactured by the American Biophysics Corp. of Kingstown, R.I., that attracts mosquitoes and other insects with the scents. The pests drawn to the trap are sucked in to their deaths by a vacuum-cleaner-like device.

The traps, which resemble an outboard motor, are being used in St. Lucie County in areas where it's inadvisable to use pesticides, The Miami Herald reported.

"We're bushwhacking the mosquitoes at choke points where they accumulate in large swarms," Jim David, St. Lucie County Mosquito Control director, told the newspaper.

The machines produce the scented mist by a nozzle. Then the insects that are attracted are pulled into a trap by what the company calls a "zone of doom" -- a stream of air above the nozzle that flows into the trap.

David said the machines reduce the need for labor-intensive spraying and fogging, allowing workers to focus their efforts against the spread of West Nile virus and St. Louis encephalitis.

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