



# UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONTROLLING MOSQUITOS FROM ABOVE

Thirteen H125s contribute to controlling Florida’s mosquito populations through aerial applications of larvicides and adulticides. The helicopter’s power and reliability make it the aircraft of choice for this unique task.

Article: Heather Couthaud – Photos: Diane Bond

With place names like Mosquito Lagoon, Mosquito Lake and Mosquito Bay\*, Florida’s long relationship with the eponymous and annoying insect is clear enough—though no one can say it’s an easy one.

### CONTROL AND REDUCE MOSQUITO POPULATIONS

The Sunshine State’s salt water marshes, swamps, and wetlands provide ideal conditions for mosquitoes to breed and proliferate, making it home to some 80 species. The insect population swells in the week after a wet period, as eggs hatch and larvae grow to maturity. With it, mosquito-borne viruses like West Nile and Zika present a risk to

Florida’s communities—not to mention the nuisance mosquitoes bestow as a commonplace pest. Applying dry and liquid chemicals is considered one of the most effective ways to control and reduce mosquito populations over large areas, making the helicopter an important tool in the state’s arsenal. Several counties in Florida operate the H125 in aerial spraying campaigns throughout the year, using larvicides to tackle egg-, larval- and pupal stages and adulticides when the insects emerge as flying, biting pests. Already used in crop spraying and firefighting, the H125 can be fitted with equipment like the three-part Isolair system that includes two liquid

**1:** The H125 is the helicopter of choice for Pasco County Mosquito Control, who operates 13 units of this helicopters for this unique utility mission.

**2:** Aerial spraying uses techniques and nozzles that apply very low volumes of chemical in micro droplets.

**3:** Lee Mosquito Control District uses the H125 to apply liquid and granular material for targeting mosquito larvae.

sprayers and a granular “hopper”; or AgNav’s GPS-navigation system which automates the spraying, freeing up pilot workload. For Florida’s spread-out communities, the H125’s extensive payload capabilities enable it to maximize coverage areas and transform it into an effective mosquito fighting tool.

### FAST AND FUEL EFFICIENT

The H125’s speed and fuel efficiency are two additional qualities that make the helicopter the aircraft of choice for Florida’s mosquito control districts. Brevard County Mosquito Control uses just two H125s to fight mosquito infestations in the area’s 72 miles (116 km) of Atlantic coastline and salt marshes.

Other districts count its fuel efficiency among its benefits in this line of work. Lee County, on the Gulf Coast, uses six H125s to control mosquito populations—down from ten aircraft when they operated an older fleet. The district’s transition to a smaller fleet was also made possible thanks

to the H125’s low maintenance burden. Another fleet upgrade, in the Florida Keys Mosquito Control district, brought the area two H125s for aerial spraying and broadcasting. Charlotte County, on Florida’s Gulf Coast, is another H125 operator with a single aircraft performing law enforcement and mosquito control duties.

On the west coast, Pasco County - home to roughly 45 different species of mosquito - is yet another operator which has been relying on a duo of H125s since April 2021. “In Florida, controlling mosquito populations is daily, year-round work, and our aerial tools are invaluable in the work that we do,” said Adriane Rogers, director of Pasco County Mosquito Control. “We are always looking for the best, most efficient and most cost effective ways to fight mosquitoes, and the H125 is the solution.”

\* Mosquito Lagoon (Volusia County), Mosquito Lake (Clay County) and Mosquito Bay (Wakulla County).

[More information here](#)



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## Did you know?

Chemical dispersal is just one part of any programme to manage mosquito infestations. The US Environmental Protection Agency and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have developed a multi-faceted approach to controlling the insects which forms the guideline for mosquito control districts. It involves preventive measures (elimination of their breeding habitats, removal of standing water), barriers (use of netting, screens, etc.), control at the larval stage (use of pesticides in targeted zones to maximize effectiveness), and control at the adult stage. Aerial spraying has been used for more than 50 years without harm\*\*. It uses techniques and nozzles that apply very low volumes of chemical in micro droplets designed to stay airborne as long as possible. Aerial spraying should be done by experts, using a registered adulticide which has been evaluated by the EPA and does not pose risk to people, pets or the environment.

\*\* Source: EPA, “Success in Mosquito Control: An Integrated Approach”.