

**Fight the bite: preparing for mosquitoes and Zika virus - 2016**



**BACKYARD BUG-ZAPPERS: DON'T EXPECT MUCH HELP**

Insect electrocuters provide some impressive crackles, flashes, and sizzles on summer nights but apparently offer little pest control around the home landscape. Some homeowners may expect to rid the area of mosquitos, and perhaps a variety of other pests, by using these devices.

Research has generally shown little positive effect. A study from Delaware investigated the "catch" from electrocuters placed around some homes near potential mosquito breeding sites during June and July. Of the 13,000+ insects eliminated by the electric grids, only 0.2% (31 specimens) were biting flies. On the other hand, more than 1,800 beneficials- including predators and parasites- were killed (about 13% of the catch).

The more visible the light to us, the poorer it is in luring biting flies. Also, many species of mosquitoes are not attracted by black lights at all. For species that do respond to UV, only a few will actually make it to the charged grids.