



The Formentera Department of Environment reports that pest control operations will begin today, targeting mosquitos and insects in the Chironomidae family at Estany Pudent, Estany des Peix and the Can Marroig salterns — all areas of fresh water concentration ideal for mosquito larvae.

Environment conseller Antonio J Sanz said that heavy spring showers and an abundance of stagnant water puddles —mosquitos' preferred habitat— were behind the decision not only to start treatment a week ahead of schedule, but to expand operations from twice to four times weekly. Two workers are expected to put in 32 days of work between April and October.

The anti-mosquito, anti-chironomid treatment is preventive, zeroing in on larvae using *Bacillus thuringiensis Israeliensis*, which acts on them directly. A natural insecticide generated by bacteria, the agent triggers production of protein crystals which, when ingested by mosquito larvae and insects, rupture cells in the gastric epithelium, causing death before pests can reach maturity.

The environment chief offered a series of things islanders could do around the house to prevent mosquito hotspots from forming: “Watch out for containers where stagnant water might accumulate, maintain recommended chlorine levels in swimming pools and sinks and place mosquito nets over wells and cisterns”. People can also make sure water doesn't accumulate in plant pots and drainage plates, he said, plus change animals' drinking water every two to three days and, in general, try to prevent puddles of stagnant water from forming.

The natural mosquito and chironomid treatment has a price-tag of €33,909.56 and is being overseen by public company Tragsa.

Last Friday crews began implementing a €12,100 plan to control cockroaches in the main towns of the island.

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Department of Communications

Consell de Formentera