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# IN ONE'S OWN BACKYARD

BY JILL KAPLAN

**C** OVID-19 has had a remarkable impact on all global citizens. We are spending more time, or all of our time, at home. As a result, the home improvement industry is booming. CNBC, NPR, and other media outlets have been interviewing spokespeople with Houzz, Home Advisor, Lending Tree, and more about this trend. Houzz reported that annual online searches for residential construction professionals is up 58% and that searches for pros specializing in outdoor improvement services has increased three-fold. Home Advisor reported that the American property owner increased their 2020 remodeling budget by \$4,000. That additional spending represents \$13,000 per household, which is an all-time high for this category.

For Florida residents the ability to work, play, and expand square footage into the outdoors has been a tremendous blessing. However, Floridians also must grapple with mosquitos, flies and the annoying no-see-um — who all thrive in high heat and humidity. Steven Jenkins, the Founder and C.E.O. of **SWAT Mosquito Systems**, confirms recent press reporting about home improvement: "The pandemic has motivated many homeowners to renovate their property. A huge priority for them is upgrading outdoor spaces and that includes mosquito control. Our installa-



tion numbers have doubled over the past year."

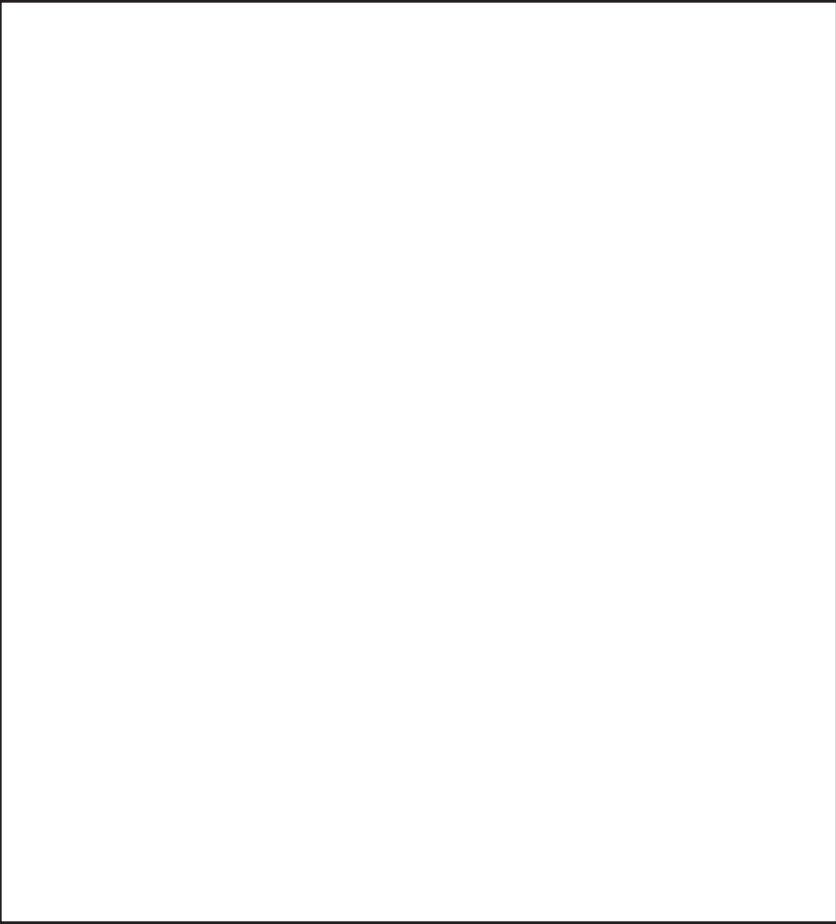
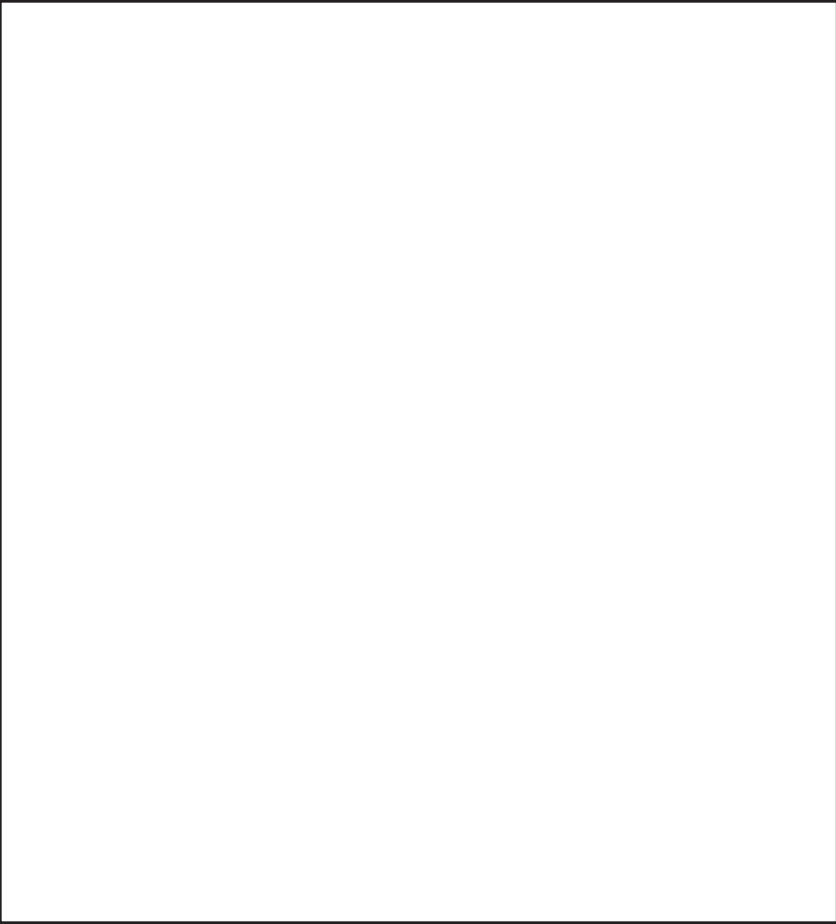
In 2021 SWAT Mosquito Systems celebrates its 15th Anniversary. In that short period of time, Jenkins has assembled a world-class team, specializes in the installation of a one-of-a-kind pest control system, and the Miramar-based firm has expanded their service area from Vero Beach south to the Keys and from Marco Island north to Naples.

The key differentiators between the SWAT system and other systems involves the delivery mechanism. SWAT Mosquito Systems apply a misting solution versus the more traditional fogging spray applications. Foggers cannot sustain sub-tropical

climates, and they break down when exposed to the elements, whereas mists are ecologically sustainable. The environmentally friendly mist consists of pyrethrum, which is derived from chrysanthemums as well as other compounds that include a 100 percent USDA National Organic Compliant alternative, a rosemary-based solution made up of essential plant extracts and other oils. The mist is applied by custom-built sprayers strategically placed around the perimeter, and they are designed to blend seamlessly into the landscaping. In addition, unlike their competitors, they utilize a system that eradicates the insect population instead of repelling them.

Field Manager Joel Echezabal has been with the company for ten years. He explained that included as a part of their services, SWAT monitors all mist release timers and tank levels right from their office on a daily basis. Their automated monitors will generate immediate email alerts if there is a system leak. Therefore, it is not uncommon for a SWAT Mosquito Systems technician to arrive at a property to do a repair before the owner even knows there is a problem. Technicians also routinely check nozzles, make sure that the system is refilling itself automatically, and clean the filters. He adds "Over the course of my career I have spent a lot of time with homeowners. 2020 represented the most interaction I





have had with new customers. Regardless of how long they have been with us all of them appreciate how our product allows them to enjoy their backyards during this pandemic.”

Most of Jenkin’s staff has been with him for over a decade. The team functions more like a family than co-workers. They pride themselves on the high degree of customer care they provide, and they are always on the look-out for a way to improve their offerings. For example, they decided to create an app for residential use that allowed a homeowner to turn on and monitor their systems from any location. This tool has been a tremendous benefit for those families unable to travel, due to the pandemic, who own second homes in Florida. They have the peace of mind knowing that in addition to the SWAT technician’s watching over their residences they too can keep an eye on their home.

The average single-family homeowner will consult with a project manager for approximately twenty minutes, and the installation, depending on the size of their property, will take one to two days. SWAT Mosquito Systems are then programmed to release mist two to four times per day based upon individual need. Jenkins explains, “All SWAT systems are set to release mist daily at sunrise and sunset as those are peak periods for activity. While Florida has insect issues all year, from May to October annually we see a rise in insect levels. During this peak period, we allow for additional daily misting should we deem it necessary or should the Owner choose to mist more frequently.”

Yordy Wingfield has been the firm’s Customer Service Manager for 13 years. She says “I communicate with customers daily. Over the past 12 months, I have noticed a tremendous increase in the number of clients upgrading their properties. They have been extremely excited to reclaim their backyard from biting bugs.” Kathy Torres, in customer service adds, “Not only does our system really work, but it is also the only one that works. We are also the only company that offers a lifetime warranty on all its equipment. Customer’s routinely express their gratitude for our service and add they would not be able to enjoy the outdoors without it.”

Jenkins and his team take great pride in their work and have adopted the very apt motto “You’re SWAT or You’re not!” To learn more about SWAT Mosquito Systems visit [swatmosquitosystems.com](http://swatmosquitosystems.com) or to schedule your complimentary consultation, call 1-866-900-SWAT. **stb**