

Mosquito Control Update

August 13, 2013

The Louisiana State Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) informed the District of a second West Nile virus case. The case was confirmed from a blood donor who had no symptoms of the viral disease. About 90% of all West Nile cases have no symptoms. Only about 10% develop West Nile fever, which consist of mild flu type symptoms. Very few develop to severe symptoms of neuroinvasive disease. This case, along with the first case, was from the Covington area. Recent mosquito pool test results indicated 7 positive samples for West Nile virus out of 70 tested. Six of the samples were isolated from the southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, and one was isolated from the inland floodwater mosquito, *Aedes vexans*. Five of the positive samples were collected from the Covington area, one was from the Mandeville area, and one was from the Slidell area. There were only three new mosquito collection sites positive while the other 4 had previously tested positive. For the year, a total of 1329 samples have been tested with 22 returning positive for West Nile virus.

Over the past two weeks, the Covington and Mandeville areas have received two aerial treatments for the control of adult mosquitoes, while the Slidell area has received one treatment. The treatments covered a total of 76,500 acres. Additional aerial treatments are planned this week in the Lacombe area. Truck mounted sprayers were employed throughout the parish. The District's primary control method for the southern house mosquito is by spraying the roadside ditches every 5-7 days. This is one of the few mosquito species that prefers to breed in water that contains a high degree of organic matter. This condition is common in areas where filter beds and septic tanks are used for individual waste water treatment. Some of the ditches contain a great deal of dense vegetation that prevents optimum penetration of a liquid formulation through the vegetation. In these cases, a granular formulation is used that produces excellent results.

Residents should take precaution when in a mosquito prone area such as wearing long sleeve shirts and pants and wearing mosquito repellent that contains DEET. Since the Asian tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*, is a capable vector for West Nile virus and it breeds exclusively in artificial containers, residents should survey their property to ensure there are no containers that are holding water. Containers commonly found in yards include flower pot saucers, vases, buckets, tires, wheelbarrows, bowls, etc. These containers should be stored where they will not collect rain water or emptied every 2-4 days.