

## **Mosquito Control Update** **August 21, 2012**

Over the past two weeks, mosquito pool test results indicated 17 positive mosquito pool samples out of 139 tested. The positive samples were collected from Covington, Mandeville, Madisonville, Slidell, Hickory, and Pearl River. Samples were collected from throughout the parish. West Nile virus activity seems to be trending down as compared with the 25 positive pools out of 131 tested for the previous two weeks. The infection levels in the mosquitoes also seem to have trended downward. Hopefully this trend will continue. The Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) informed the district that there were 3 West Nile fever cases and 1 neuroinvasive case over the past two weeks.

The District's primary concern continues to be to reduce the mosquito vector populations as low as possible. The breeding index of *Culex quinquefasciatus*, the southern house mosquito is now only 2.3 larvae per dip, which is the lowest it has been since March 2. Good control is being achieved with the spraying of the roadside ditches, which is the primary breeding habitat of this mosquito species. *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito still presents a problem, especially due to the above normal rainfall lately. This mosquito species is another competent vector for West Nile virus, and breeds exclusively in the artificial container such as tires, cans, vases, pots, and any other container what will hold water. Practically all of the service requests that the District has been receiving is for the Asia tiger mosquito. The cause and source of the problem are containers that are in residential yards and are allowed to collect water and breed these mosquitoes. Spraying to control the adults for this species is very effective, however if the containers remain in the yards unchecked, control is only very short lived because the breeding source continues to put off more adult mosquitoes. Residents are urged to take simple steps to eliminate these breeding sources that produce these mosquitoes.

A total of 125,952 acres were sprayed aurally over the past two weeks. Treatments were primarily directed in areas of West Nile virus activity as evident of mosquito pool test results. Areas treated included Covington, Madisonville, Mandeville, Lacombe, Slidell, Abita Springs, Slidell, Pearl River, Hickory and surrounding areas. Truck mounted sprayers also treated locations throughout the parish. As a result of the treatment of the roadside ditches, aerial and ground adulticide spraying, mosquito populations are considered low.

Once again, citizens should use mosquito repellents containing DEET when going in mosquito prone areas especially at night. Long sleeve cloths and long pants are also recommended.