

Mosquito Control Update August 6, 2015

The St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District was informed by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) yesterday of a confirmed human case of West Nile virus in south Slidell. This is the first confirmed human case in St. Tammany Parish for this year. Last year there were four human cases in the Parish. We continue to receive positive mosquito pools for West Nile virus. On Friday, test results indicated nine additional positive pools out of 124 sampled. Among these positive samples were two from Mandeville, one from Lacombe, and six from Slidell. The positive samples collected from Mandeville and Lacombe were the first from those areas this year. The total positive samples for the year are 48 out of 1836. Mosquito pool collections are taken from over 100 locations throughout the Parish. Obviously, the level of risk has increased with the reports of more positive West Nile virus locations. As previously stated, residents should take precaution when in mosquito prone areas by wearing mosquito repellent containing DEET. Follow the recommendations on the label when using mosquito repellent. In addition, keep doors closed as much as possible, especially at night when the southern house mosquito can enter the house. The southern house mosquito is the primary vector of West Nile virus, however, the Asian tiger mosquito is also a capable vector. This species breeds in artificial containers such as tires, buckets, vases, cans, etc. Residents are urged to survey their yards and store these containers where they will not collect water.

The hot dry weather has curtailed the development of floodwater mosquitoes and most permanent water mosquitoes. The southern house mosquito and the Asian tiger mosquito are the primary species that we are focused on. Most of the southern house mosquito breeding takes place in the roadside ditches where waste water from septic tanks and filter beds are discharged into the ditches. This situation is common in unincorporated areas of the Parish. Even though rainfall has been below average, the water from filter beds discharged help to create breeding sites for these mosquitoes. The District regularly treats the ditches for the control of the southern house mosquito once a week. Over the past ten days, a total of 78,063 acres were sprayed for the control of the southern house mosquito adults. Treatment areas included large portions of greater Slidell, Lacombe, Mandeville and Covington. Truck mounted sprayers treated many locations throughout the Parish.