

Mosquito Control Update **August 8, 2011**

Test results from the LSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab on Friday indicated only 1 positive mosquito pool for West Nile virus (WNV) out of 80 submitted for testing. This is down from the 5 positive mosquito pools from the week before last. The positive pool was in the Southern House Mosquito, the primary vector for WNV. Hopefully these latest results will begin a trend in the decreased activity of the virus. Treatment of the roadside septic ditches, the primary habitat for breeding of the Southern House Mosquito, continued at a stepped up place. A combination of *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (*Bti*) and methoprene are used to spray the roadside ditches. *Bti* is a bacterial spore that acts specifically on mosquito larvae and methoprene is a synthetic insect juvenile hormone that acts to maintain the developing larvae in the immature stage. Excellent control is obtained with these products; however, since there are no residual effects from the products, it is necessary to treat the ditches at least every 5-7 days to prevent adult mosquito emergence.

Last week, most of the Parish experienced an emergence of moderate to large numbers of adult floodwater mosquitoes. Rainfalls over the past couple of weeks have been sufficient to flood most of the woodland breeding sites of these mosquitoes. The rains stimulate hatch of the eggs laying dormant on the soil surface and within 5-7 days, mosquito development is complete. The adult mosquitoes then begin to migrate in search of a blood meal. Areas in Covington, Mandeville, Lacombe, the 6th Ward were aerially treated to reduce the numbers of the floodwater mosquitoes. A total of 92,160 acres were aerially treated last week. In addition, the entire Parish was treated with truck mounted sprayers. Mosquito counts indicated a large reduction in population numbers of these mosquitoes, as a result of the spraying. The Parish is likely to encounter more adult floodwater mosquitoes, as long as rainfall patterns continue.