

Mosquito Control Update July 12, 2016

Mosquito activity over the past few weeks have generally decreased, with the exception of the Asian tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus* and *Anopheles crucians*. The Asian tiger mosquito breeds exclusively in artificial containers such as old tires, vases, cans, and any other type of container that will hold water. Residents are urged, especially this time of year, to survey their yards and either discard or store water holding containers so they cannot hold water. This species is capable of transmitting West Nile virus and is implicated in the transmission of Zika virus. *Anopheles crucians* is a permanent water breeding mosquito that breeds primarily in wetland areas. This mosquito species has been affecting areas along the Pearl River Basin and coastal areas of St. Tammany Parish. Woodland floodwater mosquito breeding has been limited, even though rainfall has been only slightly below normal for the past several weeks. Breeding of the southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, in roadside septic ditches have been dramatically reduced over the past six weeks. In late May, the breeding index of this mosquito was 10.3 larvae per dip and is now down to 3.1 larvae per dip. This decrease is due to the good work of our larviciders in actively treating the roadside ditches where they breed. The decrease is coming at a good time, as we are now in the middle of West Nile virus season. The southern house mosquito is the primary vector for this disease. Adult mosquito collections of this mosquito in gravid traps have also decreased.

Over the past few weeks, aerial mosquito adulticide treatments have covered a total of 165,501 acres. Much of the treatments were targeted primarily at the southern house mosquito to reduce the potential risk for West Nile virus. Areas treated included Covington, Mandeville, Lacombe, Slidell, and Pearl River. Truck mounted sprayers treated approximately another 135,000 acres throughout St. Tammany Parish.

So far this year, three mosquito pools have tested positive for West Nile virus out of 1,974 tested. All of the positive pools were collected from the North Covington area. The three positive mosquito pools were from the southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*. Increased controls and mosquito surveillance have been directed to the positive locations. A mosquito pool consists of an aggregate of 5 to 100 mosquitoes.