

Mosquito Control Update **July 2, 2012**

Over the past two weeks, mosquito pool test results have indicated 23 positive samples for West Nile virus out of 143 tested. The positive samples were collected from throughout St. Tammany Parish. All of the samples except two were isolated from *Culex quinquefasciatus*, the southern house mosquito. The other two positive samples were from *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito. The positive samples have arrived earlier than usual in the season and are running higher than normal. This is the case for other locations in Louisiana as well. District personnel typically collects 60-80 mosquito pool samples each week from 25- 30 locations throughout the parish for testing.

The southern house mosquito is active late at night and early in the morning before sunrise. Precaution should be taken to prevent this mosquito from entering the house.

Adulticide and larvicide activities have been increased since the detection of the first positive mosquito pool samples 4 weeks ago. Over the past two weeks, 92,160 acres were aerielly sprayed primarily for the control of the southern house mosquito. Locations treated included Covington, Mandeville, Lacombe, Slidell, Pearl River and surrounding areas. Truck mounted sprayers treated the entire parish at least once, while locations positive for West Nile virus received additional treatments. Larvicide crews continued a stepped up program of treating the roadside ditches where the southern house mosquito breeds. All of the ditches are treated at least once a week. The life cycle of the southern house mosquito requires only 6-8 days going from egg stage to adult, so it is necessary to spray the roadside ditches once a week to break the breeding cycle. The breeding index of the southern house mosquito last week was 4.3 larvae per dip, which is considered low.

High southerly winds associated with Tropical Storm Debbie pushed tides 2-3 feet above normal and inundated coastal marshes in St. Tammany Parish. Some floodwater mosquito breeding resulted from the high tides.

Because of the presence of West Nile virus in the area, residents are encouraged to wear mosquito repellent when going to mosquito prone areas. Be sure to follow the label directions. Additionally, horse owners should be sure to vaccinate their horses for West Nile virus.