

Mosquito Control Update

July 23, 2013

Recent test results from the LSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab indicated two positive mosquito pools for West Nile virus out of 87 tested. These pools were collected during the second week in July. The first mosquito pool positive this year occurred during the third and fourth weeks of June where there were six. The total positive mosquito pools for the year are now eight out of 1,117 tested. All but one of the positive pools was collected from the Covington area, while one was collected from Mandeville. They were all isolated from *Culex quinquefasciatus*, the southern house mosquito. Each week adult mosquito collections from 35-45 locations throughout the parish are tested for West Nile virus, St. Louis encephalitis, and eastern equine encephalitis.

Adult and larval populations of the southern house mosquito have steadily declined over the past three weeks. Increased emphasis has been directed to the larviciding of the roadside ditches where this mosquito breeds. There are approximately 350 miles of roadside ditches in the parish that breed the southern house mosquito. All of the ditches are treated every 5-6 days. Within the past week, 61,440 acres were aerially sprayed for the control of adult mosquitoes. The targeted mosquito species was the southern house mosquito. The areas treated included greater Madisonville, Covington, Mandeville, Slidell, and Pearl River. In addition, truck mounted sprayers were employed throughout the parish.

Recent inspections in the marshland areas indicated very low levels of mosquito production. Woodland breeding sites however are showing low to moderate levels of mosquito breeding, as a result of rainfall. Some of the woodland breeding sites are just beginning to flood and hold water. It is expected that if the rainfall patterns continue, higher elevations in the woodland areas will be flooded which will produce more of these mosquitoes. As it stands now though, our primary focus is the control of the southern house mosquito.