

## **Mosquito Control Update**

### **July 16, 2012**

The St. Tammany Parish Mosquito Abatement District received results from the LSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab that indicated 29 positive adult mosquito pools for West Nile virus out of 68 tested. These results indicate an increase in the incident of West Nile virus in mosquitoes over the last couple of weeks. Twenty seven of the positive samples were from *Culex quinquefasciatus*, the southern house mosquito, the primary vector for West Nile virus. The positive West Nile virus samples were collected from throughout the parish and included the areas of Covington, Mandeville, Madisonville, Lacombe, Folsom, Pearl River, Hickory, and Slidell. Monitoring for the presence of West Nile virus by testing adult mosquitoes is designed as an early warning system, as an alert for the potential for human transmission of the disease. The District has been intensifying controls especially in the areas of positive mosquito samples. Even though population levels of the southern house mosquito are low, because infection levels in the mosquito are returning positive, the threat for human transmission exists. This time of year is particularly early in the season for the level of virus that has been detected in mosquitoes. Apparently the mosquito/bird cycle for West Nile virus started earlier than usual, probably due to the mild winter and warm spring.

The District was informed on Friday afternoon by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals of one (1) human asymptomatic West Nile virus case from the Covington area. The case was detected when the blood from a donor was screened; the individual had no symptoms of the disease.

Larvicide of roadside ditches for the control of the immature stage of the southern house mosquito continues at a stepped up pace. Roadside ditches high in organic content are the primary sources for breeding of the southern house mosquito. Aerial treatments for the control of adult mosquitoes will be employed, especially in the areas of positive West Nile virus activity. Truck mounted sprayers will also be utilized throughout the parish.

Residents should take precaution to avoid mosquito bites. If you are outdoors in a mosquito prone area, it is recommended that you wear a mosquito repellent containing DEET and carefully follow the label directions. Also, make sure that the windows and doors of your house are tight fitting to prevent mosquitoes from entering the house. Residents are also urged to check their yards for any containers such as buckets, cans, vases, etc., that may collect water and breed mosquitoes. The containers should be discarded or stored in an area where they will not collect water. The Asian tiger mosquito breeds in these types of artificial containers and is also considered a competent vector for West Nile virus.