

Mosquito Control Update

May 12, 2011

Mosquito activity has increased dramatically over the past several days. Even though the Parish has not experienced appreciable rainfall for the past few weeks, high tides produced from southerly and southeasterly winds have flooded the marsh to produce sizeable populations of two species of floodwater mosquitoes. Samples collected by mosquito control biologists and inspectors in marshland areas last week indicated the presence of *Aedes vexans* and *Aedes sollicitans* larvae. Some of the areas were treated where practical. On Monday, May 9, high adult populations of both species were encountered by light traps or landing rates. The activity was located primarily along the coastal areas of the Parish from south central Slidell to south Mandeville. On Monday night, 20,480 acres were aerially treated along the coast, which included Slidell to Mandeville. Truck mounted ULV sprayers treated areas in Mandeville more inland. Very good control was achieved, however, since all of the adult mosquitoes do not emerge at once, it is expected there will be more infiltrating the area and repeated treatments required. On Tuesday, May 10, another 20,480 acres were treated in Slidell mainly for the control of *Aedes vexans*. So far, *Aedes sollicitans*, the salt marsh mosquito, have not migrated north from its breeding source along the coast. The aerial treatment conducted Monday night prevented the migration from occurring. On Wednesday, another 20,480 acres were aerially treated in Madisonville and Mandeville, once again mainly for the control of *Aedes vexans*. Truck mounted ULV sprayers are employed each night during the week and dispatched to the locations of highest priority, based on adult mosquito sampling data.

Most of the woodland mosquito breeding sites remain dry, so the next time the Parish receives a considerable rainfall, it is likely that large numbers of woodland mosquitoes will be produced. The dry conditions have also affected the production of the southern house mosquito, *Culex quinquefasciatus*, breeding in roadside septic ditches. The decreased rainfall causes more organic buildup in the ditches, which favors the production of these mosquitoes. In addition, it is more difficult for the larvicide treatment material to penetrate through the vegetation due to the very low water level in the ditches. To help get more penetration through the vegetation, we increased the larvicide flow rate 50%, but still maintained the application rates of the active ingredient. Vectobac granules and vectolex granules were also used in hopes of increasing larval mortality and penetration through the vegetation. Post treatment samples have indicated better control has been achieved.

Since the beginning of March, 538 mosquito pools have been collected and tested for West Nile virus and all have returned negative.