Mosquito Control Update
October 8, 2013

West Nile virus activity, as evident by the analysis of mosquito pools, decreased over the past four weeks. A total of 339 mosquito pools were tested with none returning positive. September was the first month since May where no mosquito pools tested positive for West Nile virus. The larval breeding index of *Culex quinquefasciatus,* the southern house mosquito for September, was 3.6 larvae per dip as compared with 4.6 for August. Collections of the southern house mosquito in gravid traps also have decreased considerably. The two factors that contribute to an increased risk for a human case of West Nile virus are the infection levels in the mosquitoes and the size of the population of the mosquito species that transmit West Nile virus. Both of those factors have decreased considerably over the past four weeks. Based on the test results of the mosquito pools and the decrease in the primary vector for West Nile virus, the southern house mosquito, the primary vector for West Nile virus, the probability is high that there should not be any human infections at this point. However, it is still possible there could be a report of a case that occurred earlier in the year when West Nile virus activity was apparent.

The District is still heavily focused on the control of the southern house mosquito. Larvicide crews continue to emphasize the control of this mosquito species by regularly treating the roadside ditches once a week. The southern house mosquito is extremely prolific in breeding and can build up enormous populations if left unchecked. Over the past four weeks, a total of 67,459 acres were aerially treated, mainly for the control of the southern house mosquito. Another 63,958 acres were treated throughout the parish by truck mounted sprayers.