

Mosquito Control Update **September 10, 2012**

The heavy rainfall and extremely high tides produced from Hurricane Isaac are responsible for producing an extraordinarily large floodwater mosquito population consisting primarily of *Aedes atlanticus* and *Psorophora ferox*. These mosquito species, most of which emerged as adults on Friday of last week, are NOT good vectors for West Nile virus. Most of the floodwater mosquito production has been from the woodland areas throughout the areas of Folsom, Abita Springs, Bush, Sun, Talisheek, and Hickory. This is not to say there are no floodwater mosquito problems in other areas of St. Tammany Parish. The office is receiving many service requests for spraying throughout the parish. We are aware of the problems and the staff are working diligently to get these mosquito populations under control. With such large population numbers in many areas of the parish, it is going to take a few days to dramatically reduce the numbers. Last week, the district aerially treated 128,000 acres. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of last week, the aerial applications covered the areas of Slidell, Lacombe, Mandeville, and Covington. The southern house mosquito, the primary vector for West Nile virus, was the target for these applications. On Friday, when the huge floodwater mosquito populations emerged, 20,480 acres were aerially treated in the Hickory and Pearl River area.

Large areas in Folsom, Abita Springs, Bush, Sun and Talisheek are scheduled to be aerially sprayed this week. Truck spraying will also be employed throughout the parish.

West Nile virus activity, as evident by the testing of mosquito pools, has declined over the past month. It appears that we are now on the down side of the virus. Also, the southern house mosquito counts for both larvae and adults are at the lowest levels for the past several months. Over the past three weeks, there have only been three positive mosquito pools out of 102 tested. The last reported human case for West Nile virus in St. Tammany Parish was August 23 with an onset date of August 1-8. This is all good news; however, the District is not letting its guard down. Every 5-7 days, crews continue to spray the ditches where the southern house mosquito breeds for the control of the immature stage of development to reduce adult mosquito emergence. The District will continue to monitor for the presence of the virus and concentrate controls in the West Nile virus positive locations.