

Mosquito Control Update

September 21, 2009

Southern St. Tammany Parish experienced another major migration of salt marsh mosquitoes, *Aedes sollicitans*, at the end of last week. High tides produced from southeast and easterly winds, along with rainfall, flooded the entire marsh. Much of this area had been previously dry and the result of the flooding stimulated a hatch of a huge population of this mosquito species. A large amount of the salt marsh mosquitoes were produced south of the Rigolets in Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes. Adults began to emerge and migrate north on Friday, September 18. Landing rates as high as 50 a minute were common from southeast Slidell all the way to Mandeville. Landing rates were even higher south of the Rigolets. On Friday night, both aircraft were employed to spray 30,720 acres. The areas included southeast Slidell from Snug Harbor to Bayou Lacombe. Treatment started from the marsh/tree line and then inland about 1-2 miles. In addition, the area from Ft. Pike south about 5 miles was sprayed to help prevent northward migration of salt marsh mosquitoes from Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes. On Saturday morning, landing rates were taken in the treated areas and it was observed that another migration occurred after Friday night's treatment. Landing rates south of the Rigolets, Snug Harbor and Treasure Isle were again extremely high. In addition, high landing rates were encountered in the Bayou Liberty area. As a result these areas were retreated Saturday night with the airplanes. Coastal areas in Mandeville were also aerielly treated. A total of 51,200 acres were aerielly treated over the weekend to control salt marsh mosquitoes.

Rainfall over the past 10 days also triggered a great deal of woodland breeding mosquitoes throughout the parish, namely *Aedes vexans*, *Aedes atlanticus*, *Psorophora ferox*, and *Psorophora columbiae*. As of Friday, September 18, a small portion of the adults had emerged. The vast majority of the brood, however, was still in the larva stage. In all probability, the District will be dealing with the adults when they emerge at the beginning of the week of September 20.

Encouraging results were obtained Friday afternoon from mosquito pools submitted for testing earlier in the week. Only one mosquito pool was positive for West Nile virus. It was collected from Lacombe and was in a southern house mosquito pool, *Culex quinquefasciatus*. The trend over the past three weeks has indicated less and less West Nile virus activity, as evident by mosquito pools. Hopefully this trend will continue. The District is still aggressively treating the roadside septic ditches on a regular basis to control the southern house mosquito. The gravid trap numbers of the southern house mosquito increased last week, which was a surprise because the larval counts are considered low.