

WEST NILE VIRUS

The mosquito control season in 2009 was certainly remarkable. The spring and many of the summer months were rainy and cold, setting the stage for an active Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) season. As a result, all aspects of mosquito control were challenging. More time and effort were dedicated to larviciding as wetlands had a steady supply of water resulting in extensive larval activity.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis had a record breaking year in 2009. Activity was found reaching across the entire southern portion of the state, extending as far north as Moultonborough. New Hampshire's only reported human case occurred in Candia, although multiple veterinary cases were confirmed throughout the state. Mosquitoes carrying EEE were found in 32 communities, including Newton. Positive pools were also found in neighboring Kingston, East Kingston, Plaistow, Danville and just over the border in Amesbury and Merrimac, Massachusetts.

Dragon has identified 146 larval mosquito habitats in the Town of Newton. Crews checked freshwater sites over 450 times throughout the season. There were 138 sites treated to eliminate mosquito larvae. In addition, 133 catch basin treatments were made to combat disease carrying mosquitoes. Spraying to control adult mosquitoes was conducted three times last season in response to EEE activity in and around Newton.

The proposed 2010 Mosquito Control plan for Newton includes trapping mosquitoes for disease testing, sampling wetlands for larval mosquito activity, larviciding where mosquito larvae are found, and emergency spraying when a public health threat exists. The control program begins in April when mosquito larvae are located in stagnant water such as swamps, ditches, and woodland pools. Trapping adult mosquitoes begins in June. The mosquito control program ends in late September or early October when temperatures drop and daylight diminishes.

Homeowners can reduce the number of mosquitoes in their yard by emptying any outdoor containers that hold standing water such as buckets, trash barrels, and boats. Tires collect enough water for mosquitoes to survive. It is also a good idea to change the water in bird baths every two or three days.

If you're new in town and do not want your property treated for mosquitoes, then a written request is needed. Please send a letter to Dragon Mosquito Control, P.O. Box 46, Stratham, NH 03885. Be sure to include your name, physical address, phone number, and a description of your property with boundaries. Otherwise, your wetland may be treated. Anyone who sent a written request in 2009 may call the office to reaffirm your request. Our phone number is 964-8400. You may call our office for assistance regarding mosquitoes, the insecticides we use, spray dates, or questions about EEE and WNV.

For more information on Eastern Equine Encephalitis and West Nile Virus, visit the NH Department of Health and Human Services online at www.dhhs.state.nh.us or the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov

Respectfully submitted,
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