

Mosquito Control Update September 27, 2010

Officials of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) informed the Mosquito Abatement District on September 25 of a human case of West Nile virus. The onset of the illness was between September 5 and 11 and the individual is from the north Covington area. This is the first confirmed human case of West Nile virus in St. Tammany Parish this year. There are presently 25 confirmed human cases in Louisiana. Last week the Mosquito Abatement District received test results on 51 mosquito pools submitted for testing and 2 returned positive for West Nile virus. The two samples were collected from the Slidell area. Infection rates in the mosquitoes continue to remain low, based on test results from the LSU Veterinary Lab in Baton Rouge. So far this year the Mosquito Abatement District has received 20 positive mosquito samples, out of 1525 tested for West Nile virus. Positive samples have been collected from Mandeville, Lacombe, Slidell, and Pearl River.

Most of the focus for control has been directed to the *Culex quinquefasciatus*, the southern house mosquito and *Aedes albopictus*, the Asian tiger mosquito. The District continues to treat roadside ditches for the control of the southern house mosquito, the primary vector for West Nile virus. These ditches are treated throughout the parish at 5-7 day intervals to prevent mosquito larval development. The control product used is *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis*, which affects mosquito and black fly larvae only. Larvicide is the most effective means of control of the southern house mosquito. The Asian tiger mosquito is also capable of transmitting West Nile virus. The best means of control for this mosquito species is to eliminate its breeding source, which is water holding containers. This can be done by simply storing containers where they will not collect water. Residents are urged to survey their yards, empty water holding containers and store them in a place where they will not collect water.