

PRESS RELEASE

Immediate Release

May 19, 2009

City of Joliet prepares for mosquito season

The City of Joliet's Mosquito Management Program is under way for the 2009 summer season. The Mayor and City Council approved a contract with Clarke Mosquito Control to administer this year's program. There are four parts to the Mosquito Management Program. Part One includes public relations; educational brochures and a mosquito hotline citizen response number (800) 942-2555. Part Two consists of Surveillance and Monitoring including a Floodwater Mosquito Migration Model which uses weather data and a computer model to help predict the onset hatch and peak annoyance periods. This part also consists of monitoring the type of mosquito as well as testing for West Nile Virus. New Jersey Clarke Light Traps are also used to monitor and evaluate adult mosquito activity. Part Three consists of Larval Control which includes the targeting and treatment of mosquito breeding areas. This treatment is done prior to the hatching of the actual adult mosquito. Catch Basin control consists of three (3) separate treatments of over 8,000 catch basins, inlets and manholes with insecticide briquettes. Part Four consists of Adult control, which includes up to three (3) treatments of sprayed insecticide.

West Nile Virus is a mosquito borne virus that is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird. Most people who are infected with the West Nile Virus have no symptoms or experience very mild symptoms three to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito. Mild symptoms include a fever, headache and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body

and swollen lymph glands. Less than 1 percent of infected people with West Nile Virus will develop severe symptoms. In Illinois last year there were 20 human cases of West Nile Virus with no fatalities.

The City of Joliet expects a busy onset of mosquitoes this season due to the tremendous amount of rainfall in the spring. The ground is saturated and thus provides a greater risk for standing water and flooding and also triggers hatching of the floodwater mosquitoes. The City encourages its residents to take a pro-active stance related to mosquito control. According to Clarke Mosquito Control individuals can take the following steps to protect themselves against infection and assist in the fight against West Nile Virus:

- If outdoors when mosquitoes are active, dress in light-colored, long-sleeved clothing, long pants and socks when outdoors during prime mosquito hours. Apply mosquito repellent with DEET to clothing and exposed skin in accordance with label directions.
- Discard any outdoor container that might hold water, or empty water from wading pools and birdbaths once a week.
- Keep grass cut short and shrubbery well-trimmed around the house so adult mosquitoes will not hide there.
- Since dead birds (crows, blue jays, etc.) can be the first warning that West Nile Virus is present in the area, report dead birds on your property to your county health department.

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