

MOSQUITO CONTROL

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.

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 Stratham. Positive mosquitoes were also found in neighboring Newfields, Newmarket, Exeter, Brentwood, North Hampton, Rye, and Greenland.

Dragon has identified 95 larval mosquito habitats in the Town of Stratham. Crews checked larval habitats 466 times throughout the season. There were 238 treatments made to eliminate mosquito larvae. In addition, 746 catch basins were treated to combat disease-carrying mosquitoes. Spraying to control adult mosquitoes was conducted last season along roadways in Stratham in addition to Stratham Hill Park, Stevens Park and the schools.

Four traps were set each week throughout the season. Adult mosquitoes were caught, identified to species, and sent to the State Lab where they were tested for EEE and WNV. Mosquitoes collected in Stratham on 9/1/09 tested positive for EEE.

The proposed 2010 Mosquito Control plan for Stratham includes trapping mosquitoes for disease testing, sampling wetlands for larval mosquito activity, larviciding where mosquito larvae are found, truck spraying along roadways, 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 birdbaths every two or three days.

If you are 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, 964-8400, to reaffirm your request. You may also 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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