

DRAGON MOSQUITO CONTROL INC.

MARCH/APRIL 2019 UPDATE

A new mosquito control season starts long before crews are out checking for mosquito activity. A Special Permit issued by the State is required to conduct large scale mosquito control programs in New Hampshire. The State Permit application process begins in the cold months of winter when almost no one is thinking about mosquitoes. Our application is submitted to the State and a copy is delivered to town officials. The application is scrutinized and approved by the Pesticide Control Division, Department of Environmental Services, Fish & Game Department, State Entomologist, Division of Public Health and Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

As spring nears and Dragon anticipates receiving the Special Permit, certified letters are sent out to all the beekeepers that have registered with the NH Department of Agriculture, public notices are posted and emailed to municipalities and schools for electronic posting of notices. When we have the permit in hand, the State requires confirmation of these notifications before we receive a final written approval to begin.

A workforce of returning employees has made an excellent start to the 2019 season. Field work began with crews checking marshes, swamps, woodland pools and other wetlands for mosquito larval activity. When mosquito larvae are found, crews treat the water with a naturally occurring bacterium, *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti). Bti breaks down quickly in sunlight and will not harm people, animals, aquatic life, or other insects, including honeybees. This work will continue throughout the season.

Warm weather can be a mixed blessing. We look forward to enjoying the outdoors, but must contend with annoying and disease carrying insects and arachnids. Black fly season has arrived. It may not provide any consolation, but if you encounter a large black fly population you are most likely near a healthy stream. Ticks are also in abundance this spring. Ticks bring the risk of a variety of diseases. In a few weeks, mosquitoes join us in force. Mosquitoes that we see in the spring, while a nuisance, do not carry Eastern Equine Encephalitis or West Nile Virus. Keep in mind, personal protection is the best defense for all of the above.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nine new pathogens spread by mosquitoes and ticks have been discovered or introduced since 2004. Infectious diseases cases transmitted by insects and other animals tripled in the US from 2004 to 2016. This trend for mosquito-borne diseases is expected to continue as warmer temperatures expand the range of mosquito species and lengthen the mosquito season. In New Hampshire, as the potential for these diseases continues to rise, the role of protecting the public from mosquito-borne diseases falls on local governments. A fully functioning mosquito control program allows communities to find disease early and respond quickly.

Dragon provides surveillance, prevention, public education and mosquito population management to municipalities that fund a mosquito control program. Surveillance and disease testing can identify changes in mosquito populations and the risk of infectious disease before equine and human cases appear. Control of larvae in the water reduces the number of potential disease carrying mosquitoes. Homeowners also have a role to play. Eliminating the places where mosquitoes breed by emptying any containers in yards that hold water such as buckets, wheel barrows, pool covers, tarps, toys, trash barrels and boats is crucial. Cleaning out rain gutters and emptying your bird bath every few days will also make a difference. The CDC provides additional information at <https://www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes/>. You can also visit our website at www.dragonmosquito.com where you can read more about what we do or click on the link to follow us on Twitter or Facebook.

Respectfully Submitted,
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Dragon Mosquito Control Inc.
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