

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 24, 2009
TO: The Board of Supervisors
FROM: John T. P. Horne, General Services Manager
SUBJECT: Mosquito Control Program

Beginning in 2009, the James City County Mosquito Program intends to eliminate mosquito spraying and other treatments as either a regular part of its control program or in response to citizen complaints about mosquitoes. This change reflects cost considerations during challenging economic times and a recognition that pesticide applications result in limited control of mosquito activity overall. The program will instead rely on increased public outreach and education. As a center point to this effort, the County is initiating a hotline where citizens can obtain basic mosquito prevention information, helpful hints to homeowners, and directions to additional sources of information. Mosquito prevention information will also be publicized through the County's website, newspaper ads, and Channel 48 programming. County residents that make the small effort to remove a few containers from their backyards will make an impact on localized mosquito concentrations as well as reduce overall mosquito populations. The County will retain the capacity to conduct mosquito abatement treatments, both larviciding and adulticiding, in order to be able to respond to extreme conditions, as appropriate. The Program will continue to operate within the Department of General Services utilizing staff from both Grounds and Stormwater.

Background

Since 1987, James City County has used an *Integrated Pest Management* (IPM) approach to mosquito control. IPM uses biological knowledge of the target pest to expand and integrate an array of practices that may be used together to achieve better control of a pest with less reliance on a single control method, such as pesticides, alone. Our IPM approach consists of three major components: 1) Public education (cooperation and participation); 2) Source reduction of mosquito breeding sites; and 3) Ultra-Low-Volume (ULV) applications of low-toxicity pesticides. The emphasis of the program has always been on the first two components; however, the spraying program is probably the most recognized component by most citizens. The spraying program is also the most costly part of the program.

The Asian tiger mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*, was brought to America in 1985; it was first found here in 1994. Locally, tiger mosquito populations quickly grew and are now responsible for 95 percent of all complaints received from citizens. The tiger mosquito has several unique traits: it only uses container-bound water for its eggs, it reaches adult stage in ten days, it is active all day, it bites persistently, and it is not controlled with conventional pesticide spraying. The IPM practices that worked with other species do not work well with the tiger mosquito.

New Operating Procedures

1. Regular larviciding is discontinued but will be optional after periods of very heavy or prolonged rain. Regular adulticiding is discontinued. There will also be no adulticiding in response to citizen requests/complaints.
 - a. One spray truck will be ready during the season for special events/emergencies (JCC Fair).
 - b. Spraying may be used after heavy/prolonged rain resulting in high mosquito populations.
 - c. Spraying may be used in response to a high concentration of citizen complaints.
 - d. Spraying may be used in response to nearby viral threats such as West Nile virus.

2. Public education will expand to Channel 48 video, the County website, printed ads, and phone-line information provided to callers.
3. Calls from the public about mosquitoes will be directed to trained General Services staff who will answer questions from a prepared script.
 - a. Citizens requesting spraying will be informed of the “no-spray” policy and the reasons for it.
 - b. Citizens will be directed to the Mosquito Control website and other information.
 - c. Citizens will be given advice on how to protect themselves from mosquitoes by reducing populations in their yards.
 - d. Special cases will be referred to the Stormwater Specialist.
4. In extreme cases, spraying or other treatments:
 - a. Will be approved by the General Services Manager and under the direction of a Public Health (Category 8) certified Pesticide Applicator, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS).
 - b. Will be conducted by Grounds personnel, who will also perform truck and equipment preparations and record all pertinent data.
 - c. A Certified Pesticide Applicator (currently the Stormwater Specialist) will provide program/operational oversight, compilation of relevant data, and training of personnel assisting in this work.


John T.P. Horne

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Attachment