



PRESS RELEASE — June 4, 2015

Communications: 972-624-3156

Annual mosquito-prevention program continues

THE COLONY, Texas — For several years, the City of The Colony has followed a proactive plan of prevention and testing to address mosquito issues throughout the city. The program is particularly important now as heavy rains in recent months increase the chances for a very active mosquito season.

Through this program, areas on public property that may hold water for periods of time are identified and monitored as potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes. These standing pools of water are inspected for mosquito larvae and, if found, are treated with a larvacide, which kills the larvae before it matures into an adult mosquito. This preventative measure greatly reduces the number that hatch into adult mosquitoes.

Many people think any adult mosquito can carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans. This is not true. Most mosquitoes are considered “nuisance” mosquitoes and do not carry disease, thus are of no danger. Weekly, the city sets traps at various locations to capture adult mosquitoes and tests for “disease carriers,” specifically for West Nile virus (WNV) and St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE). If a test comes back positive, localized treatments are applied and additional testing is done in the following weeks to determine if the treatment was effective. If subsequent tests determine the presence of disease in an area and/or human cases are confirmed in that vicinity, truck-mounted adulticide treatments may take place.

In 2014 there were six batches of mosquitoes that tested positive for West Nile virus in The Colony. There was one in 2013. **Testing so far this season has yielded negative results.**

While this type of treatment may eliminate some mosquitoes, the best prevention for everyone in the community is through education and personal protection, especially for the elderly and those with health issues. Personal protection begins by following the “4 Ds” listed below:

- **Dress to protect:** Wear long sleeves and long pants.
- **Dusk and dawn:** Avoid being outside at these times if possible.
- **Defend:** Wear insect repellent with DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus or an effective alternative.
- **Drain standing water:** Eliminate any water that stands for longer than five days or treat water with larvacide according to the label.

Identifying and eliminating stagnant pools of water on private property such as unused swimming pools, hot tubs, bird baths, ponds, low areas, etc., is critical when it comes to preventing breeding grounds and hatching of adult mosquitoes. Even a half-inch of water standing in the saucer of a flower pot can breed mosquitoes. Water that stands for more than 7-10 days should be treated with mosquito dunks that can be purchased at any home improvement store.

The city is asking all residents to be aware of and remove and/or treat potential mosquito breeding grounds on their own property, and to wear protective clothing and insect repellent with DEET (or an effective alternative) when outside for activities. These steps will help minimize exposure to the diseases mosquitoes may carry.

For additional information regarding mosquitoes and the city's mosquito treatment plan, contact Community Services Director Pam Nelson at 972-624-3958, via email at pnelson@thecolonytx.gov or Chemical Applicator Shane Bartel at 469-853-1222, via email at sbartel@thecolonytx.gov, or visit www.thecolonytx.gov/Depts/PARD/mosquitocontrol.html.

To report standing water on private property, please call 972-624-3113, and be sure to provide an address associated with the issue if leaving a message.

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