

Mosquitoes and West Nile Virus (WNV) Q&A

Franklin County Board of Health

Summer 2010

Can you tell me more about the Franklin County Board of Health mosquito program?

- Thirty-eight mosquito traps are set weekly throughout the county to identify and monitor disease carrying mosquitoes.
- The mosquitoes in each trap are identified and grouped into pools of fifty. Based on historical data and/or high trap counts, some mosquito pools are RAMP (Rapid Analyte Measurement Platform) tested in our facility to give us quick WNV results.
- All mosquito pools are then sent to the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory for WNV testing and verification.
- Staff also works to eliminate standing water or will treat standing water with larvicide (to prevent larvae from hatching).
- Spraying will be determined and scheduled based on the number of disease carrying mosquitoes and/or the presence of WNV identified through trap data.

Where can I find more information about mosquitoes and the WNV?

Visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/health. You can also call (614) 462-BITE (2483) to report problem areas in your community. Residents are encouraged to visit the web site often for spray schedules and maps. Other mosquito information including trap and testing data are also posted there.

When and why do you spray for mosquitoes?

Spraying will be scheduled based on the number of disease carrying mosquitoes and/or the presence of WNV identified through trap data. Check the Franklin County Board of Health web site (www.franklincountyohio.gov/health) for a schedule of when and where spraying will occur. A detailed map of spray areas will be posted.

Should I be worried there is WNV in our community?

It is not unexpected to see WNV in mosquitoes in our community. WNV has been present for many years and historically begins to show up every June or July.

How can I protect myself and my family from WNV?

- Wear insect repellent containing DEET (follow package directions)
- Limit outdoor activity at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active
- Eliminate all standing water around your home (mosquitoes breed in water and it doesn't take much)

How do people get sick from WNV?

WNV can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito.

What are the symptoms of WNV?

It can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Symptoms include mild fever, headache and body aches, often with skin rash and swollen lymph glands. In some individuals, especially adults over 50 and those with compromised immune systems. WNV can cause serious illness that affects brain tissue. Less than 1% of people bitten by an infected mosquito will become severely ill.

How many human cases of WNV have we seen in recent years?

The last human case of WNV in Franklin County was reported in 2006 and there was only one that year. No cases have been reported from 2007 and to date in 2010.

What type of chemical does the Franklin County Board of Health use to spray?

For information on what type of chemical is used, visit our web site at www.franklincountyohio.gov/health.

Licensed and trained staff apply the pesticides which are intended specifically for mosquito control. The chemicals are registered with the U.S. EPA and Ohio Department of Agriculture, and are applied according to federal and state laws. FCBH operates ultra-low-volume spray machines that are computer controlled and calibrated to apply extremely small amounts of pesticide over large areas.

Do you have any other information about spraying and the environment?

The chemicals used by the Franklin County Board of Health do not persist in the environment; they break down within hours in water, are destroyed rapidly by light and will decompose when exposed to air. The morning after an application, the amount of residual pesticide on exterior surfaces will be negligible.

To reduce your exposure during spraying, you can take the following precautionary steps:

- Remain indoors with windows closed when spraying is taking place, if possible.
- Bring laundry and toys indoors before spraying begins. Wash with soap and water if exposed to pesticides during spraying.
- Bring your pets indoors. Cover ornamental fishponds during spray hours to avoid direct exposure.
- Outdoor tables, furniture, toys and play equipment can be covered or can be rinsed off with water following the application, but it is not necessary.
- Wash exposed skin surfaces with soap and water if you come in contact with pesticides.
- Wash any exposed fruits and vegetables with water before storing, cooking or eating.
- Wait about one hour before allowing children to play in areas that have been sprayed.
- For your safety and the safety of our operators do not approach or follow a spray truck when it is operating. If you are in a vehicle, please try to find an alternate route.

There is no need to relocate during spraying. Consult your physician if you have specific medical concerns regarding the spraying.

What if I don't want my property sprayed?

The Franklin County Board of Health maintains a "do not spray" registry of residents who request a limited shut off of mosquito spraying. FCBH will make a good faith effort to shut off truck-mounted aerosol equipment within 150 feet of a registered property. This registry will be rendered inactive if the Health Commissioner declares a public health emergency where treatment is indicated. In the event of a public health emergency FCBH will attempt to telephone members of the registry prior to treatment of their property. To request to be added to the "do not spray" registry visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/health or call (614) 462-BITE.



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