

Okaloosa County News Release - 1 -

06/17/13

Kathy Newby, 850.651.7515, knewby@co.okaloosa.fl.us

NR13-86

Okaloosa County Mosquito Control Scheduled to Begin Soon *Spot Spraying Going On Now*

The Okaloosa County Division of Environmental Services began spot spraying in May and will continue as needed. Okaloosa County Mosquito Control personnel are currently monitoring and collecting surveillance data, responding to citizen requests and performing larviciding treatments. Should conditions worsen, broadcast spraying for mosquitoes will begin without public notice.

Okaloosa County Mosquito Control and Public Health Departments urge the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include remembering to “**SWAT.**”

- **S**tay inside with screened doors and windows when mosquitoes are biting (dusk and dawn).
- **W**hen outside, wear clothing that covers skin.
- **A**pply mosquito repellent that includes DEET [N, N diethyl-m-toluamide] on your skin when you are outside
- **T**urn over standing water where mosquitoes lay eggs or better yet - rid your outdoor area of standing water in which mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

Remember to apply all mosquito repellents in accordance with the recommended frequency and methods suggested by the manufacturer.

The County Mosquito Control Program sprays for mosquitoes county-wide excluding federal and state-owned land and entities who have contacted the Mosquito Control Program for inclusion on the no-spray list. Mosquito spray trucks generally operate from 7 p.m. until 12 p.m. but could also operate in the early morning hours. Surveillance activities may indicate certain types of mosquitoes known to be disease vectors being active during other time periods than noted. If this is the case, the County will respond appropriately. The following is the Okaloosa County spray route schedule and justification of mosquito populations.

Areas of Concern:

- *Wetlands*; properties bordering Eglin A.F.B., which are not treated; and property owners unaware that they are creating mosquito breeding sites.
- *Standing water*, eliminating should be at the top of everyone's 'to do list' right now!
- *Children's pools*, plant pots, old tires*, leaf piles, pet watering bowl and gutters should be checked daily for standing water. Even something as simple as a soda lid can literally breed hundreds of mosquitoes.
- * *Waste tires* can be disposed of FREE at the South Okaloosa County Transfer Station and the Baker Landfill. – this applies only to local households and not businesses. Tire sizes are limited to passenger car and light truck tires. Quantities limited - 5 tires per household/month.

-more-

Okaloosa County News Release - 2 -

06/17/13

Kathy Newby, 850.651.7515, knewby@co.okaloosa.fl.us

NR13-86

In addition to spraying, the county has an aggressive larvaciding program in place that includes more than 1,670 sites treated and are checked on a regular basis. Additionally, more than 750 ponds and areas with standing water are treated with gambusia fish, which eat mosquito larva and reproduce at incredible rates.

Residents are also reminded to have outdoor animals vaccinated against disease. Horses should be vaccinated against Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). Although West Nile and EEE can occur throughout the year, peak season is August, September and October. Horses must receive two vaccine injections 3 to 6 weeks apart and then it is recommended every 3 to 6 months. Dog owners are also reminded to have pets treated for heartworms, as mosquitoes carry the disease as well.

The Mosquito Control Division of Public Works is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and may be reached at 651-7394 or 689-5772. Mosquito spray schedule, preventative tips and other related information is available on the county's web site at www.co.okaloosa.fl.us.

###