



NEWS RELEASE

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West Nile Virus found in daytime-biting mosquitoes

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (July 30, 2014) – The Woodlands Township reports that the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) has isolated West Nile virus (WNV) in a second mosquito species trapped at two separate surveillance sites in The Woodlands Township/South Montgomery County area.

Testing positive for the disease, *Aedes albopictus* or the Asian tiger mosquito, is active during daylight hours. Street spraying targets the most common carrier of WNV, the *Culex quinquefasciatus* mosquito that is active from dusk until dawn.

“Daytime biters are not impacted by night time spray programs,” explained Lynne Aldrich, manager of environmental services for The Woodlands Township. “Prevention is the only effective treatment that we have here for Asian tiger mosquitoes.”

Aggressive biters, *Aedes* mosquitoes are weak fliers that do not venture far from their breeding site. “The presence of the daytime biter indicates that a container of water, the preferred breeding source, is nearby,” according to Ms. Aldrich. Any small amount of standing water, even a bottle cap, can invite a mosquito to lay eggs.

Residents are urged to monitor their landscapes and empty or put away anything that can hold water, such as plastic swimming pools, toys, decorative pots, tires, buckets and other items. Check rain gutters; clean out leaves and debris that can keep water from draining.

Mosquito bits or dunks, a biological larvicide, should be applied to sources of standing water that cannot be drained, such as French drains, water meter boxes and ditches holding water for more than a few days. Ponds should be stocked with *gambusia* or other mosquito eating fish.

Active all day long in the shade, Asian tiger mosquitoes are identified by their characteristic markings according to Ms. Aldrich. “When they slow down, you can easily see the black and white striped legs and black and white striped body.”

“It is very important that everyone protect themselves from being bitten,” Ms. Aldrich urged. Avoid mosquito bites by covering up and using repellent when out of doors. Wear long sleeves and long pants. The Centers for Disease Control recommends repellents that contain DEET, oil of lemon eucalyptus, picaridin or IR3535®.

When it comes to mosquitoes, residents are reminded to think W-E-T:

- **Wear** repellent and long, loose, light-colored clothing.
- **Eliminate** standing water by dumping containers and avoiding over-watering.
- **Treat** with larvicide if water cannot be drained.

To learn more about protecting yourself and family from mosquito-borne disease, visit

www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/mosquitoinfo.



PHOTO: Characteristic striped body and legs identify *Aedes albopictus*, or the Asian tiger mosquito, a daytime biter that recently tested positive for West Nile virus.

Photo courtesy Centers for Disease Control