



INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

For Immediate Release
Friday, May 1, 2009

City Commences 2009 Insect Control Season

Winnipeg, MB – Today, the City of Winnipeg announced the commencement of its surveillance and larviciding activities for the 2009 nuisance mosquito control season.

This season's mosquito control program will continue to be based on the more environmentally-friendly Insect Control Strategy adopted by Council in 2005 which:

- Decreases the use of chemicals and increases the use of biologicals for larviciding; and
- Uses a balanced control approach including larviciding, biocontrols and residual treatments, and when necessary, fogging, to supplement these on-going measures.

Surveillance of standing water sites in and around Winnipeg began last week. At this time, low larval populations of the spring species are being reported. Ground and aerial-based larviciding activities are occurring daily, weather permitting.

- As in 2008, the Insect Control Branch continues to use 4 larviciding helicopters on contract.
- The total number of staff working at the Branch will be similar to last year, with approximately 160 staff being employed.
- Currently the Branch monitors and treats over 33,000 hectares of water area on an ongoing basis. This year, the overall numbers of hectares will likely increase due to the remnants of the flood waters as they recede.
- Our GIS database contains approximately 7,000 standing water listings, many of which contain multiple sites.
- Monitoring for adult nuisance mosquitoes in the NJLT's started today, May 1st. The trap counts and AFA will be posted on the website daily at Winnipeg.ca/bugline and will be accessible to everyone.

Larviciding targets mosquito larvae in the aquatic stage before they emerge as adults and is the most effective and environmentally-friendly approach to controlling mosquitoes. Biological products will continue to be used in environmentally-sensitive areas such as residential areas, parks, and playgrounds. Similar to last year, we are expecting to utilize biological products for approximately one-third of the total larviciding program which is a significant increase since 2001 when only 2% of the products applied were biological.

Fogging will be initiated only when the requirements of both the City policy, utilizing the AFA (Adulticide Factor Analysis) Guidelines, and the provincial pesticide use permit are met. If fogging is required, the program will be carried out in the entire city (buffer zones respected), prioritizing first for areas with highest nuisance mosquito populations. For details on the AFA factors, please refer to the Insect Control website at Winnipeg.ca/bugline. A 48 hour public notice will be issued prior to a nuisance fogging program being implemented. Daily public notices will also be issued detailing where fogging will occur that night. Personal notification by telephone or email of mosquito fogging program activities is also available by contacting the Insect Control Branch in writing at 3 Grey Street, R2L 1V2, by email at 311@winnipeg.ca, by fax at 311 or by registering on-line at Winnipeg.ca/bugline.

Property owners not wanting insecticides applied on or adjacent to their principle residence may register as "Buffer Zone Registrants" for both cankerworm and/or adult mosquito control. Those who wish to register may contact the Insect Control Branch in writing at 3 Grey Street R2L 1V2, by faxing it to 311 or on our convenient on-line registration at Winnipeg.ca/bugline. A minimum 48-hour turnaround time is required for processing so residents are encouraged to begin registering now for the 2009 season, in the event that cankerworm control or mosquito fogging is required.

The use of Insect Management Areas will continue to be used to assist the public and the media in locating areas which are being treated. All Winnipeg neighbourhoods have been grouped into 51 Insect Management Areas so that as residents become familiar with their Insect Management Area, they will find it much easier to reference when their area is going to be treated. Information on all fogging and cankerworm control activities will be provided by referencing the specific Insect Management Area in which they are being carried out. These maps, including buffer zone registration forms can be found on our website, Winnipeg.ca/bugline, as handouts at all City libraries, and in the back of the 2008/2009 MTS White Pages. You can also find out the Insect Management area that you live in by calling 311.

Property owners are also encouraged to eliminate standing water on their properties by taking one of the following steps:

Dump It! - containers

Drain It! - eavestroughing or unused containers

Cover It! - rain water collection containers

Fill It! - low-lying areas

Treat It! - biological larvicide

Cankerworms

Over the next couple of weeks the Insect Control Branch will provide full monitoring information regarding last falls and the current spring adult female cankerworm moth population captured on the monitoring tree bands. The fall overall counts have fallen from the peak in 2007 but it is expected that certain areas of the city will be defoliated by cankerworm larvae feeding on the foliage of the trees. With the addition of the spring monitoring data, this will give us a more accurate indication of the magnitude of the likely population that will hatch in late May/early June, weather dependent.

Many citizens of Winnipeg banded their trees last fall and spring and this will certainly help to lessen the cankerworm population. Areas of the City which have been extensively banded should experience less defoliation than areas where banding was less prevalent.

It is likely too late to carry out any further banding of your trees this spring as the majority of wingless female moths have likely already climbed the tree and laid their eggs in the crown. Banding of trees needs to occur in mid April or before the first significant thaw to control spring cankerworm populations. Please remember to remove the bands after the May long weekend and put new sticky bands up in early September to control the fall cankerworm.

Interested individuals may acquire more information by contacting the City at 311 or by visiting the City's Insect Control website at Winnipeg.ca/bugline.

- 30 -

Media inquiries may be directed to the City of Winnipeg Media Inquiry Line at (204) 986-6000 or via email at MediaInquiry@winnipeg.ca