



NORTHEAST MASSACHUSETTS MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT NEMASSMOSQUITO.ORG

Frequently Asked Questions

Town-wide or Target ULV Adulticide Treatment

What should I do if my neighborhood will be (“sprayed”) treated?

The Mosquito Control District suggests keeping pets and children inside until 15 minutes after the truck passes. Street-side windows may be closed, but air conditioners can remain on. The treatment is distributed using an ultra-low volume machine on a small pickup truck, and generally covers an area 150’ on either side of the truck. Once dry, the material is no longer there.

My yard is full of mosquitoes; how do I know which ones have EEE?

There is no way of telling which mosquitoes carry EEE without testing them. Currently, the mosquito-borne viruses to be most concerned with are EEE and West Nile Virus (WNV). The precautions for both are the same – wear long sleeved shirts and long pants when out during high mosquito activity, and use an appropriate insect repellent.

If we are assuming that EEE exists throughout the town, why aren’t we conducting a town-wide spraying?

There are many species of mosquitoes in our area, but not all are carrying EEE. The species of mosquitoes we are concerned with are prevalent in reedy marshes and red maple swamps. Mosquito Control has surveillance traps throughout the region and sends samples for virus testing on a weekly basis. Decisions to adulticide a target area or town-wide are based on the results of these tests.

I don’t live in an area that is being treated for EEE/WNV, do I still need to take precautions?

Yes, once the risk level is raised for your community it is important to still wear proper CDC/EPA approved insect repellent, long sleeves and long pants and limit, if not cancel, your recreational outdoor activities between dusk and dawn. The trapping indicates a suggested risk level, not the presence or absence of the disease.

I don't want my property sprayed for mosquitoes; how do I prevent that?

There is a process to request an exemption; the request form can be accessed here:

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-request-exclusion-from-wide-area-pesticide-applications> .

There is a 14 day wait until the request becomes effective.

Can the spraying be done early in the season in areas of hatching so the problem can be avoided?

NEMMC performs preventative treatment early in spring by larviciding and killing mosquitoes while they are still in their larval. ULV Adulticiding aka "Spraying" is only used to address adult flying mosquitoes. There are over 50 species of mosquitoes in Massachusetts, all hatching at different times, some of which carry different risk levels for transmitting virus. Mosquitoes involved in virus transmission do not hatch until later in the season.

How should I prepare if spraying is being done on my street?

The pesticide product NEMMC uses is to target adult flying mosquitoes and is only applied at dusk or after the sunsets, never during broad daylight hours. If your street is scheduled for an Adulticide application, you should close any windows to your home facing the street and stay indoors from dusk until midnight or the estimated time frame that the application will be complete. You can expect to see a white truck drive down your street during this time frame with the pesticide sprayer on and a mist expanding from it over 300 feet wide. This process only takes a few minutes for a quick application treatment to kill the current flying mosquitoes only.

My street was scheduled to be sprayed and was overlooked, I did not see the truck come, how do I know if I have been sprayed?

If you reside in an area that was part of the target spray, and there was no cancellation due to weather, your residence was most likely treated. The pesticide applicators decide how they want to complete their route for the night, which means your residence could be anywhere on the roster between the proposed application times. The Northeast Massachusetts Mosquito Control District is very reliable and does not leave the town until the area has been completed. The sprayers are much quieter than they used to be and many people don't realize the technicians have driven past their residence.

My town did not conduct a spray because of temperature, why is that?

Per pesticide product label, NEMMC will not conduct barrier or ULV adulticide applications when temperatures are below 50 F and/or when wind speeds exceed 10 mph and/or when precipitation is predicted within 24 hours of a barrier application. Temperature can affect the efficacy of the pesticide product and it is against the law to not follow the label when applying pesticide products.

When it rains, does that create new batches of mosquitoes?

In some types of mosquitoes, the answer is yes. As mosquito treatment is completed, the population of the adult mosquitoes will decrease.

What pesticides are being used? Are they safe?

Pesticides for mosquito control are applied at very low concentration. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has regulated mosquito control through enforcement of standards instituted by the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

All of NEMMC pesticide products used are EPA registered and are safe to humans, pets, wildlife and the environment as long as the label is followed by the applicator. NEMMC staff are licensed pesticide applicators who are environmentally conscious and complete many hours of continuing education on safely handling pesticides. Many of whom have environmental educational backgrounds and are passionate about the protection of this District.

Follow this link to see specifically Adulticide products, labels, and SDS sheets:

<https://www.nemassmosquito.org/public-education/pages/adulticide>

Or contact Taryn LaScola with the Massachusetts Pesticide Board for specific questions regarding pesticide chemistry, bees, or environmental impacts. <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-pesticide-board>

What about my kids at the school playground or athletic fields?

It is recommended that children follow precautions as well and wear insect repellent, long pants and sleeves, and reduce time for outdoor recreation between dusk and dawn. Your town may have scheduled barrier treatments on school grounds, which may have been completed earlier in the season.

Any treatment that takes place on school grounds is in compliance with 333 CMR 14.00 Children and Families Protection Act. Follow this link to learn more

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/333-cmr-14-protection-of-children-and-families-from-harmful-pesticides/download>

Can I leave my air conditioners on during a spray?

Most air conditioners cool the air that is already inside the house rather than pulling from outside, in which case it is fine to leave air conditioners on during an Adulticide application.

Should I be concerned with spraying near our water source?

There is no necessary concern about any pesticide treatment done by NEMMC near any water sources. All drinking water sources are tested and treated at the Water Treatment Plant before entering the distribution system. The spray itself is sprayed at such a small volume and will not get into any water sources.

How will the spraying affect my vegetable garden?

The treatment will have no effect on your vegetable garden; there is no residue when the treatment is conducted. As always, wash your fruits and vegetables before consumption. But if you are still concerned, cover your garden over night before the spray to give more peace of mind.

When is it safe to go back outside after spraying?

The best option is to wait to go outside until midnight (or otherwise scheduled) when the treatment is complete. But if you must take your animal outside, wait until 15 minutes after you see the truck passes by, and take your animal right back inside rather than a walk because the truck may be on nearby streets.

Why are we only spraying areas at a time instead of the entire town and get it over with?

Target/block Adulticide treatments have been shown to be very effectively helps to practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM). It is against recommended EPA pesticide guidelines to use pesticides when it is not necessary.

How the state arbovirus plan ties to BMPs of communities

Each municipality has their own unique Best Management Practice Plan (BMP) for mitigating mosquito-borne diseases and nuisance mosquitoes. These BMPs are based on the needs of the community, the landscape, and input from the local Board of Health. BMPs mirror the Massachusetts Arbovirus Surveillance and Response Plan, which is created by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

You can view this Plan on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website by following this link: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/arbovirus-surveillance-plan-and-historical-data>

What are the notification requirements for a Target or Town-wide Adulticiding treatment?

It is up to the town/city if they decide to notify residents or not. Usually, they opt to do some sort of notification, either through reverse 911 or use some type of system for mass notifications. NEMMC does not do this notification for the town.

What are the requirements for notification and signage with Adulticiding or Barrier treatments for parks and schools?

NEMMC personnel will post a sign at each entrance to the property when we conduct an Adulticide or Barrier mosquito treatment, and will retrieve the signs posted after the treatment. When parks are treated, the town usually notifies the residents. When schools are treated, the school administration notifies all parents if the treatment occurs during the time that school is in session. If the school is closed for the summer and there are no school sanctioned events taking place on school property, they don't need to notify.

Won't honeybees be damaged by the treatment?

The technicians do not start the treatment until half an hour after sunset, when all bees should be safely back in the hives. The material used dissipates once it dries.

What are the impacts on bees from the pesticide use?

There has been no known bee or beehive kills due to SRB mosquito control pesticide products. For more information see the Massachusetts Pesticide Board's website at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/massachusetts-pesticide-board> or contact Taryn LaScola.

Note: Any questions regarding bees, insects, or chemical sensitivity can be directed towards: Taryn LaScola Pesticide Board, Division of Crop and Pest Services and Apiary Program, at 617-626-1776