

Spring Update 2017

During the extreme drought last year, I said I wouldn't complain about a rainy day. However, I am complaining about another rainy week. My house smells like wet dog. My work trucks smell like wet boots and my crew is tired of being wet. I'm glad the drought has eased but more water means more mosquitoes. The wetlands are brimming with water and that's just what mosquitoes need to survive.

We were busy during March and April gearing up for the start of the mosquito season. Public notices were published in numerous local papers and posted around town. Certified letters were sent to registered beekeepers notifying them of our planned work. We eagerly awaited the State issued Special Permits. The permits arrived in April and we were given final approval to start controlling mosquito larvae.

Dragon Mosquito Control began checking various wetlands in April with larviciding beginning soon thereafter. Ice and snow lingered in many swamps well into April. Data collected throughout the month reveals normal populations of mosquito larvae in the water. It remains to be seen what the summer months will bring. Dry conditions will limit mosquito populations while a wet summer will produce more mosquitoes. One or two heavy rain events would impact the mosquito population drastically.

The new 2017 adult mosquitoes begin hatching during the warmer days in May. In the meantime, black flies keep us company while we're doing yard work and cleaning up the damages of winter. A few hibernating mosquitoes leftover from 2016 may visit you try to get one last blood meal.

Disease activity doesn't begin until late summer and continues into November. Beginning in July, adult mosquitoes collected throughout town will be sent to the State Lab in Concord where they are tested for diseases. These disease test results tell us whether mosquitoes are carrying EEE or WNV. This guides our recommendation to spray the schools, parks and athletic fields.

This year, Dragon will be utilizing newly acquired traps specifically designed to capture ZIKA mosquitoes. The BG-Sentinel traps will be deployed throughout the southeastern part of the state to monitor the presence of *Aedes albopictus*, one of the two species known to transmit the ZIKA virus worldwide. This mosquito has spread to Massachusetts and survives the winter. If it becomes established in NH, then it will likely survive our winters too. The other mosquito that transmits ZIKA is a tropical mosquito. While it's possible that species could be imported into NH, it's highly unlikely it could survive our winter temperatures.

Residents who do not want their wetlands treated may use our No-Spray Registry online at www.DragonMosquito.com/No-Spray-Registry or write to Dragon Mosquito Control, P.O. Box 46, Stratham, NH 03885. Be sure to include your name, physical address, phone number, and a description of your property with boundaries. Otherwise, your property may be treated. Anyone who submitted a request in 2016 may contact the office to reaffirm your request. Inquiries may be emailed to help@dragonmosquito.com or call the office at 734-4144. Check out our web site: www.dragonmosquito.com where you can request a larval survey, read more about what we do or click on the link to follow us on Twitter or Facebook.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah MacGregor
President
Dragon Mosquito Control, Inc.