

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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“Mosquito Control”

Buzzing mosquitoes are the bane of outdoor activities. Many communities take steps to control the mosquito populations as much as possible. John Kouba, the City of Norfolk Health Inspector, is in charge of monitoring and controlling mosquitoes in Norfolk.

As a result of the relatively wet spring weather, Kouba said the mosquito populations have currently reached a high enough level that mosquito fogging operations have begun. Fogging is generally conducted in the evening hours from 7:30 pm to 11:00 pm when mosquitoes are most active. The fog targets mosquitoes with the droplets from the fogger killing the mosquitoes on contact.

Kouba said the fogging operation is subject to favorable weather conditions. Wind speeds from five to ten mph are preferred conditions for fogging so that the spray particles can disperse in an area. Too much wind not only moves the chemical out of the area being treated, but in windy conditions, the mosquitoes seek cover and are not apt to come in contact with the pesticide.

According to Kouba, there are specific criteria for fogging in a community as required by the pesticide label. The pesticides that are used for fogging have been proven to minimize the risks to human health or the environment and are not harmful to birds or wildlife.

Fogging will reduce mosquito populations in an area, but mosquitoes are mobile, with some species able to fly for miles, so the relief from fogging can be temporary.

In addition to fogging, which focuses on the adult mosquitoes, areas of standing water in Norfolk are identified by city staff and monitored for the presence of mosquito larva. If necessary, these areas of water are treated to prevent the emergence of adult mosquitoes. The treatment includes a mosquito specific larvicide to control the mosquito larvae that have not yet hatched.

“It is important for residents to drain and eliminate containers such as tires, buckets, barrels, or any other open container that holds standing water for more than a week. Any water that is left standing outdoors for a long period of time in the summer makes an ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes,” Kouba said.

Even sitting water in flower pots and drainage containers can provide a place for mosquitoes to lay their eggs. Some studies have shown that one tablespoon of standing water can be the source for over 200 mosquitoes. Mosquitoes will not lay eggs in fresh or flowing water.

Kouba said that though there has been no detection of West Nile Virus reported in Nebraska in 2011, in past years the virus presence has become more prevalent in the late summer and fall.

“No one likes mosquitoes when doing lawn work or enjoying an evening out on the deck. Residents can do their part by avoiding any standing water on their property and we will continue our efforts at controlling the mosquito population throughout the summer,” Kouba said.

For more information, contact the City Health Department at 844-2046.