



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TEAMWORK KEY TO CONTROLLING MOSQUITOES

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – Spring rain and the increase in daily temperatures create perfect conditions for the return of pesky mosquitoes. Curtailing these nuisance pests is a team effort, calling upon cooperation from St. Charles County residents and staff from the Division of Environmental Health and Protection.

“During Mosquito Control Awareness Week (June 25 to July 1), we remind residents of the joint efforts required to abate mosquitoes and prevent the spread of disease,” Division Director Ryan Tilley says. “When residents take steps to eliminate breeding areas in their backyards and protect themselves by wearing repellent when outdoors, our staff can focus on larger habitat areas to mitigate problems. As part of the week’s activities, our mosquito control program staff will distribute repellent packets and share additional prevention techniques.”

To decrease the mosquito population in St. Charles County and prevent related disease outbreaks transmitted by infected insects, the division’s mosquito control program inspects problem areas and applies treatment when surveillance systems or resident notifications alert staff. Staff efforts target habitat areas to control larvae and treat adult mosquito populations with a small amount of insecticide to reduce numbers.

The division contracts with several municipalities to minimize mosquito populations in their community. Residents living in unincorporated St. Charles County or within the city limits of Augusta, Cottleville, Dardenne Prairie, Flint Hill, Lake Saint Louis, Portage des Sioux, St. Paul, Weldon Spring, Weldon Spring Heights and Wentzville, who are concerned about nuisance mosquitoes, should visit www.sccmo.org/mosquito to use the online portal to register and request assistance. Those without Internet access can call 636-949-1800 for service. Residents living within the city limits of O’Fallon, St. Charles and St. Peters should contact their respective city halls.

While the division will use various techniques to reduce mosquito populations, individuals also must take personal responsibility. The most effective way to block insect bites is to use repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, IR 3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus when outdoors. Eliminating potential breeding grounds around the home by draining areas where water settles, cleaning clogged gutters, removing trash and debris that could contain water, and disrupting fountains, ponds or bird baths also help to reduce mosquito development.

Awareness of the potentially dangerous conditions associated with infected mosquitoes has increased over the past few years. Most of these infections, such as malaria, Zika virus and Chikungunya virus, are concentrated in tropical destinations and are troublesome for travelers. However, one concern across the United States, and here in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area, is infection from the West Nile virus — which displays symptoms including fever, headache, body ache, vomiting, rash, and in extreme cases, brain or spinal inflammation. For additional information on the West Nile virus, please visit www.sccmo.org/1038/West-Nile-Virus.

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To help monitor mosquito populations, the division introduced a collection and assessment program this season. Staff will trap mosquitoes at various sites around St. Charles County from June through September and examine them to establish the species commonly found. Confirming the type of mosquitoes in our community will enable staff to better treat populations, as various species behave differently and are active at different times of the day. Additionally, the collection will allow staff to test individual insects for the presence of diseases.

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About St. Charles County's Division of Environmental Health and Protection

Throughout the year, the Division of Environmental Health and Protection works with residents, area businesses and local organizations to promote healthy conditions in St. Charles County. Following local, state and federal regulation, the division inspects and licenses public service providers, operates a robust recycling program and implements the county's mosquito control measures. To learn how the division helps to ensure the community's well-being please call 636-949-1800 or visit www.sccmo.org/environmental.

About St. Charles County

Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. St. Charles County consistently ranks one of the healthiest places to live in Missouri in the County Health Rankings report published by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. It is home to 12 scenic county parks, encompassing more than 2,800 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.

With a population of 385,840, St. Charles County is home to large employers including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit www.sccmo.org.