

Cities protecting residents from West Nile *and* pesticide exposure: City-wide bans on adulticide spraying

Lakewood, Ohio (2003)

"No-Adulticide Policy: Successful Risk Management"

Scientific evidence indicates that the burden of man-made chemicals on the human population is significant. This burden increases the potential dangers from additional exposures through broadcast pesticide spraying and therefore carries serious ethical considerations.

It is the majority recommendation of this committee that the City of Lakewood adopt a no-adulticide policy in response to the West Nile Virus:

- Pesticides pose potential risks to human health and our environment. The full biological impact of pyrethroid pesticides is not fully understood because conclusive evidence is not yet available regarding their impact on endocrine dysfunction, neurological damage, and cancer. Because the long-term health effects not known for most pesticides, federal law prohibits pesticide manufacturers from labeling their products as "safe or non-toxic," even when used as directed.
- There is no evidence to show that ground based spraying is an effective method in controlling mosquito populations in an urban environment such as Lakewood. There are some anecdotal reports that reflect a variety of experiences, but no concrete studies exist which could justify the use of pesticides as a tool for protecting human health.
- Current science continues to show that there is no correlation between spraying pesticides on adult mosquitoes and reducing the incidence of West Nile virus in humans.

The City of Lakewood should use all preventive measures, other than broadcast pesticide spraying, in order to protect public health from the potential dangers associated with the West Nile Virus. These measures should include, at a minimum--

- 1.) broad public education,
- 2.) personal responsibility on behalf of all Lakewood residents,
- 3.) aggressive surveillance of Lakewood's mosquito population,
- 4.) habitat control, and
- 5.) larvaciding.

These measures have been shown to be the most effective approach to mosquito control, and they pose no public health risk to members of the community.

Lakewood public health officials should evaluate these measures each year and take action to broaden these efforts as we learn more about Lakewood's mosquito population and West Nile Virus in the years to come.

Should the spread of West Nile Virus continue despite these efforts, the City should consider more drastic measures. For example, the City could conduct a more aggressive public education campaign through door-to-door canvassing, cancel

community gatherings at Lakewood Park or adopt a more severe citation system for homeowners who maintain mosquito breeding grounds.

Much study and research remains to be done regarding the occurrence of West Nile Virus. Cases of serious human illness have occurred in communities that have undertaken vigorous spraying campaigns.

Without clear evidence that pesticide spraying will have a significant impact on the targeted mosquito population and with the toxicity associated with the use of pesticides, our community should not be exposed to these potentially dangerous chemicals.”

Lyndhurst, Ohio

ORDINANCE NO. 2003-37: Bans widespread West Nile pesticide spraying

“ ... there is substantial belief that the more effective way of controlling the mosquito population is by larvacide treatment and thorough education of the City's residents regarding methods and procedures to minimize exposure to the virus; ...”

Porter, Indiana

“The Porter Town Council decided ... that the risks of spraying to eliminate mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus outweigh any benefits.”

Church Point, Rayne and Crowley, Louisiana

“ [The] Church Point City Council approved a resolution for removal of the town from a plan to spray for mosquitoes ...”