

# THE WAY OUR HEALTH DEPARTMENT HANDLES THE THREAT OF WEST NILE VIRUS WILL MAKE YOU SICK.

They call themselves the Metro Public *Health* Department, but when it comes to mosquito control are they really looking out for our health? They spray our neighborhoods with toxic pesticides when safer, more effective methods are available. The Health Department refers to it as "West Nile spraying," but pesticide spraying results in *NO* detectable difference in infection rates.<sup>1</sup> They have no official written plan, questionable scientific protocol and no spraying strategy.

## PEOPLE SUFFERED BECAUSE OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S PESTICIDE SPRAYING.

Pesticide use is *NOT* risk-free. Children, pregnant women, the immune-compromised and people with chemical sensitivities, asthma or allergies are among those at higher risk for adverse effects.

20 people (that we know of) reported symptoms after their neighborhoods were sprayed, including a Donelson man who was hit with pesticide spray. He, allegedly, has been permanently injured and filed a lawsuit against the city. People reported being sprayed and seeing others sprayed by the trucks, *in plain view of the drivers.*

In contrast, there was one (1) confirmed locally-caused human case of West Nile virus in Davidson County in 2003. All the while, effective mosquito management could have been done without poisonous spray.

## THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S SPRAYING PROGRAM DOESN'T LOWER THE RISK OF WEST NILE VIRUS.

The risk of West Nile virus is extremely low, and studies show that pesticide spraying does not lower the rate of the disease. Regardless of whether the communities were sprayed or not, there were no confirmed human cases of West Nile virus in 2004 anywhere near Middle Tennessee. In 2003, the incidence of West Nile virus was extremely low. Spraying is for emergencies only. So, why does the Health Department unnecessarily spray us with toxic pesticides for a disease with such a low incidence?

## WITH NO WRITTEN PLAN, COULD THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PROTECT US IN A REAL EMERGENCY?

We mapped the locations of positive mosquito pools for West Nile virus and all the areas that were sprayed in 2003 and 2004. We found many discrepancies.<sup>2</sup> One look at these maps and most people would question the Health Department's scientific protocol. When we showed the 2004 map to Dr. Brent Hager of the Health Dept. and asked how they determined where to spray he replied, "I don't remember now."

If there had been a real emergency requiring the use of spray, would people have gotten sick or died?

## WHY DOESN'T THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT USE SAFER MOSQUITO CONTROL?

Cities that elected *NOT* to spray pesticides – *but used safer methods* – have controlled West Nile virus as well as those that have sprayed. So, if there are less toxic and less costly methods available that are equally as effective, why would our city spray our neighborhoods with toxic pesticide?

## WHY IS THERE NO OFFICIAL PLAN?

1 The Center for Disease Control evaluated the effectiveness of 2003 Fort Collins and Larimer County, CO adult mosquito programs. Its study found no detectable difference in human infection rates between sprayed and unsprayed portions of the city. *Study Session Item for Ft. Collins City Council, 2/24/04.* <http://citydocs.fcgov.com> or call (970) 221-6515. Also, the *14 City/County Comparative Analysis of Cities that Spray and Those That Don't But Use Other Methods* shows no significant difference in West Nile virus incidence for 7 cities that didn't spray compared to 7 that did in 2002 and 2003. Request a copy: [nospraynashville@earthlink.net](mailto:nospraynashville@earthlink.net)

2 Data on testing and positive mosquito pool locations supplied by Dr. Brent Hager of the Health Dept. Spraying history locations obtained on their web site.

**WE'RE SICK OF IT!**  
**WE DEMAND A RESPONSIBLE  
MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAM WITH:**

- ✓ an official written plan.
- ✓ scientific protocol guided by experts.
- ✓ strategy and guidelines to protect the public from West Nile virus & poison.
- ✓ a commitment to less risky and more effective methods.
- ✓ the right to participate in the creation of policies that affect our health.
- ✓ accountability from the decision makers.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.**

Contact the following people and tell them you *don't support non-emergency spraying*. Tell them about our list of demands (above).

**1.** Dr. Stephanie Bailey, Director of Health, Metro Public Health Department, 340-5622, 311 23rd Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37203, [stephanie.bailey@nashville.gov](mailto:stephanie.bailey@nashville.gov)

**2.** Mayor Bill Purcell, 862-6000, fax: 862-6040, [mayor@nashville.gov](mailto:mayor@nashville.gov)

**3.** Your city council member and at-large members, 862-6780, or go to [www.nashville.gov/council/feedback.html](http://www.nashville.gov/council/feedback.html)

**THEN**, *opt out* of spraying by calling the Metro Public Health Department at 340-5653.

Submitted by the No Spray Coalition: BURNT/No Spray Nashville, EarthMatters Tennessee, BioControlNetwork, Nashville Greenlands, Foundation for Global Sustainability, plus over 600 Davidson County residents who have signed our petitions requesting the Health Department cease unwarranted spraying and focus on less costly, safer, more effective forms of mosquito control.



**NoSprayNashville.org**

*Advocates for a safe and healthy community.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

[www.nospraynashville.org](http://www.nospraynashville.org)  
[nospraynashville@earthlink.net](mailto:nospraynashville@earthlink.net)  
(615) 327-8515