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Mosquito Control

MURFREESBORO – Though early rainfall has provided better growing conditions for flowers and plants this spring, the standing water it leaves has also provided ideal growing conditions for one of the area’s most notorious pests – mosquitoes.

With spring firmly in place and even warmer days already upon the community, plans for what will likely become this summer's fight against mosquitoes are already underway.

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service advises a major part of that battle is to kill the larvae before they have a chance to become adults, Chris Griffith, City Engineer, said.

To do that, he added, larvicide dunks will again this year be placed in standing water along public rights-of-way where the insects breed.

“What we’ll be doing,” Griffith said, “is putting out larvicide – it comes in dunks that look like a donut – in standing water and drainage ditches if they are holding water. That includes retention ponds.

We won’t be applying them to flowing water and we won’t be applying them to private property,” Griffith added, “but property owners can purchase these dunks at four or five major retailers with garden centers around town.”

“Just call the office (893-6441) and we will provide that information,” he said.

For those mosquitoes that do make it to adulthood, the Rutherford County Health Department has some advice. Officials there caution citizens not to venture outside during dusk and dawn times of day when mosquitoes are most active.

"Our department is encouraging people to be aware of it," a health department official said, "and if people are going to go outside, we are advising them to wear long sleeves and long pants along with using insect repellent that contains the ingredient DEET."

A few years ago, the City of Murfreesboro decided not to develop a mosquito-spraying program based on extension service advice, Griffith said, and the same will be true this year.

“We talked to people at the ag extension service and they said spraying is not very effective,” Griffith said. “Mosquitoes are usually breeding off the (public) right-of-way and spraying on the road doesn’t get to them.

A Rutherford County Agricultural Extension spokesperson agreed saying spraying only gets to the adults. The larvae hatch in about a week and “you’re right back where you were.”

“The insecticide is also unhealthy and dangerous for people with respiratory problems,” Griffith added.

“That spraying can aggravate those conditions and you wind up creating more problems than you solve.”

Call the local health department at 898-7785, Murfreesboro Street Department at 893-4380 or city Planning and Engineering at 893-6441 for more information.