



NEWS RELEASE

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City Streets Division fighting mosquitoes in known problem areas

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The City of Murfreesboro is battling mosquitoes again this spring by attacking larvae with a mosquito-attacking larvicide known as *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti).

The Murfreesboro Street Division is sending crews to mosquito-prone locations throughout the City to deposit the mosquito-attacking larvicide in public areas with standing water. The larvicide comes in the form of a donut or biscuit and can also be purchased by private property owners at farm co-op and outdoor stores.

“Killing larvae before they have a chance to become adults is the recommendation of both the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC),” said City Engineering Director Chris Griffith. “We want to be as proactive as possible in reducing mosquito development by distributing larvicide in standing water and drainage ditches on public property where the insects breed.”

The State of Tennessee Health Department advises the most effective way to reduce mosquitoes around your home is to eliminate breeding grounds by removing any containers that collect rainwater such as cans, buckets, bird baths, and old tires. The State also recommends personal protection measures such as clothing and insect repellants to help reduce the chance of mosquito bites. For additional advice on reducing mosquitoes and protecting your family from mosquito bites, watch this YouTube video from the State Department of Health <https://youtu.be/1bw7IzUHRnc>.

The City’s mosquito abatement efforts, including the purchase of additional larvicide, is a routine transition from winter-time activities to spring. The World Health Organization declared a global health emergency in February 2016 as the Zika virus spread in the Americas following an outbreak in Brazil. For more information on the Zika virus and mosquito-borne diseases, visit www.tn.gov/health and www.cdc.gov. Health officials have warned that the Gulf Coast regions are particularly vulnerable, including Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi.

Periods of warm weather coincide with higher numbers of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, which carry the virus.

A strain of the Zika virus was first confirmed in Brazil in 2015 and has spread to more than 40 countries. Many researchers believe the disease is already present in the United States. Symptoms resemble less dangerous diseases at first, such as the flu, but effects can severely impair people for life. It has been linked to microcephaly in babies born to infected women.

The City of Murfreesboro does not utilize a mosquito-spraying program based on extension service advice that it is less effective in reducing mosquito breeding. For more information about mosquito control, contact Chris Griffith, City Engineer, at 615.893.6441 or via email at cgriffith@murfreesborotn.gov.

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