



INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

**For Immediate Release
Tuesday, May 28, 2013**

Update on Insect Control Branch Activities

Winnipeg, MB. – Today, the Winnipeg Public Service announces an update on nuisance mosquito control and the start of the cankerworm control program.

The Insect Control Branch continues an aggressive larviciding program and is **reminding Winnipeggers to do their part and empty any standing water on their property.**

The forecast of continuing warm temperatures with chances of rain will create conditions that allow for quicker larval mosquito development. Spring adult nuisance mosquitoes are emerging in small numbers and the first generation of summer adult nuisance mosquitoes will begin to appear in the water over the next 7-10 days, weather dependent.

The Insect Control Branch's aggressive larviciding program will continue using all resources to check and treat approximately 30,000 hectares of potential larval development sites in Winnipeg and the surrounding 10 kilometer treatment area, to reduce the potential for the emergence of a small adult nuisance mosquito population. The City Entomologist will be monitoring conditions on a daily basis, and is ready to implement the range of control measures available as nuisance activity and environmental conditions vary.

The city-wide New Jersey Light Trap count today was one. Currently, the Adulticiding Factor Analysis (AFA) rating remains at Low. The Insect Control Branch is closely monitoring the AFA conditions daily, and will change the level as the factors that make up the AFA vary.

Citizens may have noticed midges flying around. Midges are non-biting flies that resemble mosquitoes. They are similar in size and general appearance and tend to swarm like mosquitoes. If you are seeing swarms of what appears to be mosquitoes but you are not being bitten, they are likely just midges.

PLEASE HELP FIGHT THE BITE!

The City is strongly encouraging property owners to also help "Fight the Bite" as approximately 50 per cent of standing water sites are located on private property.

Homeowners can take one of the following steps to eliminate standing water on their properties:

- **Dump It!** - containers
- **Drain It!** - eavestroughing or unused containers
- **Cover It!** - rain water collection containers
- **Fill It!** - low-lying areas
- **Treat It!** - biological larvicide

Cankerworm Control Program

2013 will be another year with very few cankerworms throughout most of Winnipeg. The ICB is expecting a few “hot spots” in the North End, East Kildonan, West Kildonan, North Kildonan and River Heights.

The cankerworm control program will be treating very selective City boulevards and focussing on City cemeteries and parks, where cankerworms are starting to cause significant levels of defoliation. Current surveillance information indicates that the larvae are feeding on the leaves, causing many small holes known as “shot gun hole” damage.

The Insect Control Branch will begin its cankerworm control program **Wednesday, May 29, 2013 at 9:30 p.m.** Tree spraying will be carried out in **Insect Management Area 47**. The program will move through various locations in the city and will focus on areas where City trees are at risk of significant leaf damage.

A Public Service Announcement will be issued daily, providing information on which treed areas of the city will be sprayed the following day. This announcement will also be posted on the [Insect Control website](#). The cankerworm treatment program will normally occur seven nights per week, from 9:30 p.m. – 5:30 a.m., **weather permitting**.

Throughout the program, surveillance crews will continue to identify areas where city trees require treatment. Recent monitoring of the adult cankerworm population indicates that most areas of the city will have minimal damage. The exception being on some very localized streets where major defoliation may occur due to the cankerworm larvae feeding on the foliage of the large stands of American Elm, Manitoba Maple, Green Ash, and ornamental trees, the preferred hosts for spring and fall cankerworms.

Treatment will be conducted using *Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki* (Btk), a biological, organic product, which is sprayed from high pressure tree sprayers directly onto the foliage of the trees. Once Btk is ingested by cankerworms, they stop feeding and die approximately two to three days later.

Homeowners are responsible for cankerworm control on their property

Citizens can spray their own trees with Btk, which is available at most home and garden centres, or they can contract a tree spraying company by referring to the Yellow Pages under tree service or exterminators.

Homeowners are reminded to remove tree bands

Please remember to remove any tree bands as the band will damage the bark of the tree if left on throughout the summer. To control fall cankerworms, please put new sticky bands up in early September.

General Information

Property owners not wanting insecticides applied on or adjacent to their principle residence may register as “Anti-Pesticide Registrants” for both cankerworm and/or adult nuisance mosquito control programs. Those who wish to register must provide identification that ties the registrant to the address being registered for a buffer zone. A photocopy or scanned document like a driver’s licence, or utility bill will suffice as acceptable identification proving primary residence. There are four options to register. In writing to Insect Control Branch at 3 Grey Street, R2L 1V2, by faxing or e-mailing 311, or in person at 1539 Waverley Street. Please remember a minimum 72-hour turnaround time is required for processing.

Citizens may register for email notification regarding Cankerworm and/or Adult Mosquito by visiting the [Insect Control website](#). They can also register for telephone notification by calling 311 and leaving their name, address and phone number. Once registered, residents will receive automated phone or email notification identifying the area(s) of the City in which the Insect Control crews are intending to work, weather permitting.

Interested individuals may acquire more information by contacting 311, or by visiting the City’s [Insect Control website](#).

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