



# County of Santa Cruz



## OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL CSA 53

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Beginning at 8 am, Wednesday, July 18, 2007 (weather permitting) **Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control (MVC)** will be applying mosquito control granules by helicopter over 60 acres in and near Watsonville: within portions of West Branch Slough, Struve Slough, Watsonville Slough, Amador Pond, Bjur Pond, Minto Marsh, Freedom Lake, Sunset State Beach Marsh and Pinto Lake that will reduce the emergence of pestiferous mosquitoes from the shallows of those wetlands. If the helicopter is unavailable or the weather is bad the treatment will be Thursday, July 19, 2007. This is not aerial fogging.

Warm weather and dense aquatic vegetation growth have encouraged the development of the summer species of mosquitoes, which are hatching prolifically from aquatic larvae. A targeted aerial and ground-based larval control effort provides relief from bites and is important for the prevention of mosquito-borne diseases. The application of granules by helicopter is a proven method of controlling larvae, which we have successfully used since the inception of the program in 1993.

The mosquito larvicides being applied to the marshes are two biological microbials, *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti) and *Bacillus sphaericus* (Bs). These products are very selective, meaning they effectively reduce the immature mosquitoes (aquatic stages) and prevent the emergence of adult mosquitoes, but are not harmful to humans, birds, fish or other wildlife. By controlling the larval stage the MVC prevents the dispersal of adult mosquitoes into the community and reduces the need for less selective measures such as fogging adult mosquitoes. The helicopter will only be seen for a few minutes in any one area.

The MVC encourages residents to empty yard containers of standing water, wear long sleeves, pants and repellants, obtain mosquitofish for ornamental ponds, notify the MVC of biting mosquitoes and to report dead birds and tree squirrels to the State hotline, 1-877-WNV-BIRD, as they could help locate West Nile virus activity.

Thank you.