



County of Santa Cruz



OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL CSA 53

640 Capitola Road, Santa Cruz, California 95062
(831) 454-2590 Fax (831) 464-9161 Internet www.agdept.com

KEN CORBISHLEY
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

PAUL L. BINDING
MANAGER

NEWSTIP/PSA

CONTACT: PAUL BINDING

(831) 454-2590 OFFICE

464-9161 FAX

247-7640 CELL

8/22/07

Beginning at 8 am, Thursday, August 23, 2007 (weather permitting) **Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control (MVC)** will be applying mosquito control granules by helicopter over 30 acres in and near Watsonville: within portions of Struve Slough and Sunset State Beach Marsh 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 Friday, August 24, 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, including West Nile virus. 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. There have been four wild birds detected with West Nile virus in the County to date.

Thank you.