



News Release—For immediate release w/Photo
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Photo Caption Info: During a recent recognition meeting in Columbus, Tuscarawas County Health Department (TCHD) officials were awarded a mosquito control grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). Pictured from left to right are TCHD Environmental Health Specialist-in-Training Alex Pearsall, Ohio EPA Director Anne Vogel, and TCHD Environmental Health Services Director Michael Kopko.

Tuscarawas County Health Department’s Mosquito Control Program Receives Grant Funding

DOVER—Progress is currently underway for the Tuscarawas County Health Department’s (TCHD) Mosquito Control Program thanks to a recent grant of \$24,993 from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). TCHD mosquito technicians began work in early June to reduce the county’s mosquito population and prevent disease.

Through the TCHD Mosquito Control Program, TCHD staff conduct larviciding to kill mosquito larvae and pupae before they have a chance to become adult mosquitoes. Staff also collect mosquito specimens from traps that are placed at locations across the county. When traps capture an abnormally high number of mosquitoes, or include mosquitoes that test positive for mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile Virus (WNV), the TCHD mosquito technicians conduct adulticiding (also known as mosquito spraying) to decrease the number of adult mosquitoes and reduce the spread of disease.

“We are thankful to the Ohio EPA for this grant award to continue our mosquito control efforts,” explained Michael Kopko, TCHD Director of Environmental Health Services. “These funds allow us to hire seasonal staff members who work from June through September to keep the county’s mosquito population under control and help prevent illness.”

Following the 1999 West Nile Virus (WNV) outbreak in the United States, TCHD increased its surveillance efforts to pinpoint disease-carrying mosquitoes. This involves strategically positioning mosquito traps throughout Tuscarawas County. Captured mosquitoes undergo testing for WNV through the Ohio Department of Health, providing vital data on infected mosquito hotspots within the county. This information guides TCHD in targeting mosquito control efforts.

TCHD uses environmentally friendly, bacteria-based products to manage larval mosquito populations and uses a less toxic adulticide spray. These products effectively control mosquito numbers while minimizing negative effects on other wildlife and plants.

Moreover, TCHD educates the public about where mosquitoes breed around homes, shares information about mosquito testing for encephalitis, teaches how to treat standing water to get rid of mosquito larvae, and conducts evening spraying in areas where mosquitoes are a problem.



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Finally, TCHD encourages county residents to help reduce mosquito activity in and around their homes by taking the following actions: removing standing water from yard/property; and cleaning gutters, bird baths, and swimming pools regularly. To prevent mosquito bites, TCHD recommends using mosquito repellent and wearing long sleeves and pants if a person must be outside during peak mosquito biting hours from dusk to dawn.

To learn more about TCHD's mosquito control program or to request that your property be added to the "no-spray" list, call (330) 343-5550 or email eh@tchdnow.org. Please note that TCHD conducts mosquito control activities only in Tuscarawas County townships, cities, and villages that have opted into the program. To learn if your area has opted in, visit <https://www.tchdnow.org/mosquito-control.html> .

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