

ADULT MOSQUITO CONTROL and DOMESTIC HONEYBEES

Standard Operating Procedures

April, 2015

(updated October, 2016)

developed by

Delaware Mosquito Control Section

Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife

Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

in consultation with

Delaware State Apiarist

Delaware Plant Industries Section

Delaware Dept. of Agriculture

The purpose of this document is to reflect operational arrangements and understandings among the Delaware Mosquito Control Section (MCS) [Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Division of Fish and Wildlife], the Delaware State Apiarist [Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA), Plant Industries Section], and DDA-registered beekeepers for protection of domestic honeybees from possible adverse effects potentially associated with exposures of honeybees to mosquito control adulticides. These Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) represent an updating in April, 2015 of arrangements and understandings dating from November, 2003, in that not surprisingly with passage of time new developments and conditions have arisen warranting document revisions, and with some minor revisions further made in October, 2016.

The MCS wants and needs to perform its needed spray operations, which the MCS undertakes for the public's health, safety and welfare, in manner that will not jeopardize the viability of valuable beekeeping activities and all the associated environmental and economic benefits that honeybees provide; and in turn in pursuit of honeybee protection, the DDA and DDA-registered beekeepers realize the need to collaborate and cooperate with the MCS in manner that will still allow for timely, effective mosquito control important for the public's safety, health and well-being. What follows is a set of protocols designed to achieve both goals, calling for several actions on part of Delaware's beekeepers and appropriate responses by the MCS or DDA.

For starters and if desired, indicate the locations of your beehives and your bees' important foraging areas in the DDA's BeeCheck system at <http://dda.delaware.gov/pesticides/Driftwatch.shtml>, which is part of the DDA's DriftWatch program. The MCS might then consider such information in advisory fashion. But please note that merely signing up for BeeCheck doesn't obviate beekeepers' needs to still comply with the protocols below.

Pay attention to the MCS's daily Spray Announcements via one or more ways:

- Calling the MCS “hotline” at 1-800-338-8181 for a recorded announcement.
- Hearing a PSA possibly broadcast by a local radio station.
- Checking the MCS website, at <http://de.gov/mosquito>
- Subscribing to the MCS’s Spray Zone Notification System (SZNS) at <http://de.gov/mosquitospray>, which is probably the best way to go.

In event you have a concern for where the MCS plans to adulticide, quickly contact the MCS to convey such concern, best done from 8:00 am-4:00 pm on weekdays.

- For MCS’s upstate field office in Glasgow, covering all of New Castle County and the northern half of Kent County, including from Dover north, call 302-836-2555.
- For MCS’s downstate field office in Milford, covering southern Kent County south of Dover and all of Sussex County, call 302-422-1512.
- In event you have to reach the MCS afterhours, on weekends or holidays, call DNREC’s 24-hour line at 1-800-523-3336 or 1-302-739-4357. But due to possible inter-agency communication problems after hours, or on weekends of holidays, it’s best to try to directly reach the MCS during regular business hours.

Depending upon specific circumstances and needs, the MCS at its discretion might then:

- Determine that a planned adulticide (whether by air or ground) could still safely proceed, including possibly making some changes or alterations to the spray plans; or
- Decide not to do any type of adulticiding over, in or near the area of concern; or
- Postpone any adulticiding over, in or near the area of concern for up to 24 hours, until such time as a beekeeper can move or otherwise protect the hives.
- In event a beekeeper will not or cannot move or otherwise protect his/her hives, then depending upon specific circumstances and needs at hand, the MCS at its discretion might:
 - Decide not to do any type of adulticiding over, in or near the area of concern, and possibly then engage the DDA State Apiarist to help with any public relations problems; or
 - Possibly engage the DDA State Apiarist to work with the beekeeper, in still trying to see if and how the hives might be moved or otherwise protected; or
 - Possibly still proceed to adulticide over, in or near the area of concern.

Further information concerning the background and rationale for development and implementation of these SOPs can be found in a 10-page document at www.dnrec.delaware.gov/fw/mosquito/Documents/MC-Honeybees-Rationale-Oct-2016.pdf.