

Luzerne Conservation District



WHAT IS THE MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE CONTROL (MDC) PROGRAM?

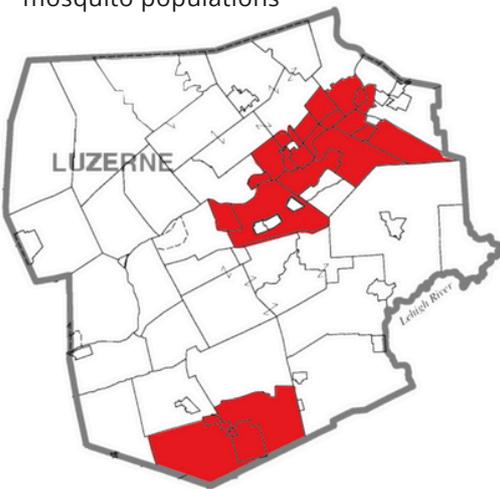
The Luzerne Conservation District (LCD) works in partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to lower the risk of human exposure to diseases, such as West Nile Virus, transmitted by mosquitoes.

The District accomplishes this through:

- Educating the public
- Eliminating mosquito habitat
- Trapping mosquitoes
- Sending mosquitoes to DEP for disease testing
- Utilizing control methods to lower mosquito populations



LCD and DEP staff implementing mosquito control after Tropical Storm Debby



MUNICIPALITIES WITH WNV DETECTED IN 2024

WHAT IS WEST NILE VIRUS?

- The program started in response to West Nile Virus (WNV), but has since expanded to include new disease concerns
- WNV is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito
- Mosquitoes become infected with WNV from biting an infected bird and then can pass it to humans through their bite
- The District routinely traps the mosquitoes that carry this virus and sends them to DEP for testing

MUNICIPALITIES WITH WEST NILE VIRUS DETECTIONS IN 2024

Courtdale Borough	Luzerne Borough
Edwardsville Borough	Nanticoke City
Exeter Borough	Pittston City
Forty Fort Borough	Plains Township
Hanover Township	Swoyersville Borough
Hazle Township	West Hazleton Borough
Hazleton City	West Pittston Borough
Jenkins Township	West Wyoming Borough
Kingston Borough	Wilkes-Barre City
Lafin Borough	Wyoming Borough
Larksville Borough	

Visit DEP's Vector Management page for more information and season updates!
<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/programs-and-services/integration/vector-management>



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WHAT IS JAMESTOWN CANYON VIRUS?

- Pennsylvania first tested for Jamestown Canyon Virus (JCV) in 2022
- JCV was detected in Luzerne Co. for the first time in 2023
- JCV is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito
- Mosquitoes become infected with JCV by feeding on deer or other mammals that have the virus in their blood
- The District routinely traps the mosquitoes that carry this virus and sends them to DEP for testing



MUNICIPALITIES WITH JCV DETECTED IN 2024

MUNICIPALITIES WITH JAMESTOWN CANYON VIRUS (JCV) DETECTIONS IN 2024

Edwardsville Borough
Plains Township
Plymouth Township
West Wyoming Borough



Mike Skokoski (MDC Program Technician) performs mosquito control after Tropical Storm Debby

2024 SEASON SUMMARY

- The 2024 season saw more West Nile Virus than in 2023
- Despite overall lower rainfall, warmer artificial container standing water habitats supported mosquitoes that carry WNV (catch basins did not flush out, etc.)
- Less available water brought birds closer together (host for WNV)
- Warmer temperatures increased overall mosquito populations
- Tropical Storm Debby in August triggered a significant emergence of mosquitoes in late August onward



Tires are great at breeding mosquitoes!

This wheelbarrow is great habitat for larvae!



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Remove mosquito habitat (standing water) from your municipality (drilling holes in outdoor trash cans, removing unused containers from around municipal buildings, etc.)
- Contact the District with any mosquito-related concerns

2024 SEASON TOTALS

Total Adult Mosquitoes Caught	91,296
Total Traps Set	721
Larval Samples Collected	488
Sites surveilled	215
Total Complaints	200+
Total Control Operations	289



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UPDATES FOR THIS UPCOMING SEASON

PROTECT YOUR HORSE

It's more important than ever to protect your horse against EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis)



EEE was detected in Luzerne County in 2024

What to Do:

- Vaccinate your horse early BEFORE mosquitos emerge
- Eliminate standing water on your property
- Keep horse's drinking water fresh
- Bring horses in before dusk
- Treat permanent standing water with Mosquito Dunks®



EASTERN EQUINE ENCEPHALITIS (EEE) FOUND IN A TURKEY IN LUZERNE COUNTY

- EEE was detected in a wild turkey in Luzerne County late last year
- EEE is spread through the bite of an infected mosquito
- Horses are especially vulnerable to EEE with a 90% fatality rate so it is very important to vaccinate horses and get boosters
- EEE is a rare, but dangerous mosquito-borne disease with historic presence in Luzerne County (the last detection before last year was 2019)
- There is no vaccine for humans, so the best protection like with all mosquito-borne diseases is to reduce exposure to mosquito bites:
 - Wearing EPA approved insect repellents
 - Wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants
 - Maintaining window screens
 - Eliminate standing water around your house/office building
 - Treat water that can't be eliminated with Mosquito Dunks

POLARIS PURCHASE

The Luzerne Conservation District's Mosquito-borne Disease Control (MDC) Program recently purchased a Polaris Ranger 1000 to help with mosquito surveillance and control in Luzerne County. The UTV was purchased using funds through a MDC grant provided by PADEP. It will help staff access remote hard-to-reach floodplain and other areas where significant mosquito populations originate, while transporting critical surveillance equipment and control products. The District's MDC staff is looking forward to the increased efficiency in protecting Luzerne County citizens from mosquito-borne diseases.



Pictured from left to right: Lauren Holder (MDC Program Specialist) Keith George (MDC Program Coordinator), Jay Wilkes (Chairman of LCD Board of Directors)

MOSQUITO TEAM MEMBERS

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