



Town of Acton  
Health Division

Sheryl Ball, Health Director

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June 4, 2020

TO: John Mangiaratti, Town Manager

FROM: Sheryl Ball, Health Director

RE: Mosquito Control

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### Mosquito Control:

The Town of Acton is one of 42 communities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that belongs to the Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project (CMMCP). See below for a list of services that they provide:

**SURVEILLANCE:** Mosquito populations are monitored in both the larval and adult stages to determine the appropriate control methods to be employed, prevalent mosquito species, and disease transmission potential.

**LARVICIDING:** Wetlands and suspected mosquito breeding sites are monitored from March through September to determine the need for applications of environmentally sensitive products (typically Bti) to control and/or eliminate the larval mosquito.

**SOURCE REDUCTION:** Reducing or removing larval habitat by recycling, waste disposal or other means is a permanent solution. We have a tire recycling program for area residents.

**DITCH MAINTENANCE:** Mosquitoes need still, stagnant water to complete their life cycle. The Project conducts maintenance on ditches, culverts and man-made ponds to improve water quality and increase water flow, reducing the potential for larval mosquito habitat.

**ADULTICIDING:** Hand-held or truck mounted sprayers are used to reduce the adult mosquito levels in residential areas to reduce mosquito exposure. The Project has worked diligently over the past 20 years to achieve the goal of reducing the dependency on adulticiding by increasing the emphasis on larviciding, public education, source reduction and ditch maintenance.

**RESEARCH AND EFFICACY:** While CMMCP is an agency charged with the control of mosquitoes, we strive to check for efficacy of our products and techniques, and whenever possible perform research in new or different areas of mosquito control.

**BEAVER MITIGATION:** CMMCP receives many requests from city and town officials and property owners seeking assistance to alleviate flooding cause by beaver activity. The most frequent issue affecting CMMCP is dam building activity which clogs culverts and drainage ditches. Increased flooding creates new habitat for mosquitoes and increases the need for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION:** Educating the public about mosquitoes and their biology is an important aspect of the Project's program. We offer a comprehensive program geared towards school-aged children from Kindergarten to High School in member communities. This program is tailored to meet the needs of intended audience.

If residents wish to make a complaint about mosquitoes, you may call the CMMCP office at 508-393-3055 between 7:00 AM - 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday or visiting their website at [www.cmmcp.org](http://www.cmmcp.org) and clicking on the service request tab. The results of an investigation may warrant the use of a mosquito insecticide to defined, site-specific areas of the town. Such an application may be accomplished by using hand or truck mounted equipment, depending on the extent of the application.

The posted dates of areas that have received a resident request to be sprayed, can be found on [www.cmmcp.org](http://www.cmmcp.org). These dates are subject to change due to weather conditions, mosquito populations, mosquito virus activity and/or special event spraying. This program will shut down when cool night time temperature becomes predominant in this area. A detailed notice about their spray schedule is posted on the CMMCP phone system after 3:30 p.m. each day, and it is also [listed on their website](#).

The Town **DOES NOT** conduct a town wide spraying unless there is an eminent public health threat. This threat is detected through testing of mosquitoes that are found in traps placed in multiple areas of Acton. If a mosquito is identified to contain a disease and the Town has determined that spraying will protect our residents from this disease, you will be notified by a reverse 911 phone call that spraying of areas effected will be warranted and this information will also be placed on the town's website. In the event that this need arises you may opt out by following the below revised process:

- No deadline to file an exclusion – can be done any time of year (prior deadline was before March 31).
- Exclusions must be recorded through the Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources (was through the City/Town Clerk).
- All exclusions expire on December 31 of the year filed (prior expiration was March 1).
- Effective date is 14 days after receipt of the exclusion by MDAR.

Under **333 CMR 13.03**, an exclusion request may be made to opt out of wide area pesticide applications as defined in 333 CMR 13.01 Requests must be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) either via first class mail or through an online form. Exclusion requests may be made at any time during the year, shall be effective 14 days from receipt of the request, and shall be in effect for the remainder of the calendar year in which the request was made. All requests shall expire on December 31 of the calendar year in which it was made.

Once a request is received by MDAR, it will then be transferred to the Mosquito Control Project that covers the region in which the property is located, if applicable. Properties to be exempted will be entered into a database designed to track excluded properties, which will be used by the Projects during wide-area applications. A list of requests may also be made available to city and town clerks upon request.

All areas designated for exclusion from wide area applications of pesticides and mosquito control applications of pesticides approved by the State Reclamation and Mosquito Control Board shall be marked as follows:

- **Applications by Aircraft.** The person requesting exclusion shall clearly mark boundaries or areas to be excluded using marking methods approved by the Department.
- **Ground Applications.** The person requesting exclusion shall mark the boundaries or areas to be excluded at least every 50 feet using marking methods approved by the Department which clearly defines the area of exclusion. Approved marking methods shall be listed on the Department's website. A mosquito control project or district may require a specific method from the approved list, which shall also be made available on its website.

Exclusion will not be valid if it is not made in accordance with 333 CMR 13.03.

For More Information please see:

[https://www.cmmcp.org/sites/cmmcp/files/uploads/exclusion\\_request\\_process\\_letter.pdf](https://www.cmmcp.org/sites/cmmcp/files/uploads/exclusion_request_process_letter.pdf)

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### **Designations Process:**

Please be aware that this exclusion request process replaces the previous process by which requests were submitted to a city or town clerk by certified mail. If you have made a request in previous years and would like to continue to have your request recognized by a Project, please

make sure to submit your request directly to MDAR using the methods identified on this webpage.

The link to all of this information is also available on the Town of Acton website by clicking the following link <https://www.acton-ma.gov/143/Public-Health-Information>. If you should have any questions, please contact the Acton Health Division at [health@actonma.gov](mailto:health@actonma.gov) or 978-929-6632.