



**JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**405 Second Street, P.O. Box 437**  
**Hillsboro, Missouri 63050**  
**PHONE: 636-797-3737 FAX: 636-797-4631**

## **Questions Regarding Mosquito Control?**

Recently mosquito control staff persons have been stopped in the field by individuals with questions about mosquito control in Jefferson County. Often they are being asked why spray trucks are not being seen around the county. As a result this FACT sheet is being provided to help answer your questions.

### **1. Why do I not see the mosquito control truck in my neighborhood?**

Due to significantly reduced funding the mosquito program has had to limit mosquito control activities. These activities are surveillance based. Mosquito spraying is conducted in response to West Nile or other mosquito disease activity, with nuisance control being significantly limited. The mosquito control program is responsible for control in all areas outside of cities, encompassing nearly 600 square miles. At the height of its activity the mosquito control program has employed as many as 6 staff persons to run spray trucks on a routine basis from 2002 through 2006. Funding has been eliminated causing reduction in staff to one full time person and 2 seasonal persons and reduced control funds. The Health Department has partnered with Jefferson County in previous years with funding for the program. In spring 2009 the county elected not to fund the program. The Health department decided to continue the program despite lack of funding. Other methods of funding are being explored but without adequate, sustainable funding the program may be in jeopardy.

### **2. Why is funding being reduced?**

The County Health Department is funded by a property tax. This tax was passed in the late 1940's and was sufficient until recent years. The tax rate was initially 10 cents per 100 dollars valuation of property. The rate has been reduced by the Hancock Amendment to 7.62 cents per hundred dollars valuation. State funds that the health department receives have also been reduced or eliminated. Since the health department does more than mosquito control, funding has been distributed where it is most needed. The health department has many programs that impact the public. These include inspections of every eating establishment in the county, pandemic flu preparedness, vaccinations of children, testing of county drinking water supplies, and many other critical services that affect the entire county every day.

### **3. What has the health department done to obtain funding?**

The health department has asked the public for an increase in the property tax in 2007 and 2008 spring elections. The tax initiative was defeated by a slim majority of voters. The department continues to look for grant or contract opportunities and to take advantage of stimulus package funded services such as the Missouri Career Center to employ seasonal help. It is noteworthy that the health department and public health in general has not received any stimulus money.

### **4. What can we do to help the health department?**

Support the department in initiatives that can help bring in funding that keeps the department going. Contact your legislator to let them know you want the services the department provides and if you see a measure that will provide funding on the ballot remember that mosquito control can not operate without stable funding.

Remember, public health affects you directly whether or not you see a mosquito truck. If you eat, drink or breath the air in the county, Jefferson County Health Department is involved, and affects your life every day!

**Protect yourself against mosquitoes. Use insect repellants that contain DEET or PICARIDIN. Eliminate standing water sources such as tires, clogged gutters, containers, uncovered swimming pools and other sources that can breed mosquitoes.**