

Regional Policy for a Standardized Preparedness and Management Approach for West Nile Virus for Health Purposes: Mosquito Surveillance, Education and Larval Control

Scope

In 2003, the Province of British Columbia announced a comprehensive provincial strategy to address West Nile Virus (WNV). The Province, with leadership provided by the BC Centre for Disease Control, is currently at response level IIa indicating that arbovirus activity is evident in Alberta. The Province expects WNV to arrive in British Columbia in 2004.

In an effort to support the Province in its strategy, the GVRD, through a Working Group of the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee, has developed a standardized approach for both the preparedness and management of mosquitoes for health purposes. The Working Group, representing 12 municipalities as well as the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health Authorities, and the University of British Columbia Plant Operations, has prepared the following table outlining the approach, the tasks involved, the jurisdictional responsibilities and the timing required.

This policy is based on the regional/local governments, as land owners, assuming responsibility for the management of mosquitoes on their lands. Mosquito management on private lands is the property owner's responsibility and will be managed by the Regional Health Authorities under the provision of the *Health Act*.

This policy represents the minimal standard for management of larval mosquitoes for health purposes on public land¹. Adult control should be considered only when there is a significant human health risk and only implemented when ordered by a Regional Health Authority. Planning for adult mosquito control will be led by the Regional Health Authorities with the participation of their member municipalities and the GVRD.

This policy can only be effective with significant, continued financial support from the Province.

Task	Responsibility				Timing
	Municipal	GVRD	RHAs	Prov/Fed	
A. Sustainable Response Planning					
1. Each jurisdiction ² should prepare a sustainable WNV response plan for their lands based on this policy.	lead ³	lead	support ⁴	lead	complete by July 2004
2. Each jurisdiction should regularly monitor and evaluate its response plan.	lead	lead	support	lead	ongoing

¹ 'Public land' means any lands owned by a municipality or the GVRD.

² 'Jurisdiction' means municipality, the GVRD, the Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Health Authorities, the Crown Provincial and the Crown Federal or their groupings.

³ 'Lead' means to take responsibility for implementing the task described.

⁴ 'Support' means to provide assistance or input to the lead jurisdiction responsible for implementing the task.

Task	Responsibility				Timing
	Municipal	GVRD	RHAs	Prov/Fed	
3. The Federal and Provincial governments should be encouraged to provide ongoing financial assistance to local governments in implementing WNV response plans.	support	lead	support	support	ongoing
B. Mapping & Inventory					
1. Each jurisdiction, using <i>Municipal Mosquito Control Guidelines</i> (Ellis, 2001) as a standard, should map and classify mosquito breeding habitat on their lands in a GIS format, as “high, medium, low risk” as appropriate to the vector target, with notes describing the criteria such as natural features, human influences, fisheries values.	lead	lead	support	lead	complete in 2004
2. Mapping of habitat, hot spots, sensitive areas ⁵ , and monitoring & surveillance results by individual jurisdictions should be rolled up and made available to all jurisdictions to assist in providing a larger sub-regional or regional context.	support	lead	support	support	complete in 2004
3. Each jurisdiction should evaluate mosquito breeding habitat on their lands and identify hotspots (areas with high ratings for the target vector) and identify areas that are sensitive to management measures.	lead	lead	support	lead	complete by July 2004
4. Where applicable, each jurisdiction should evaluate catch basins for vector species on their lands.	lead	lead	support	lead	complete by July 2004
C. Surveillance					
1. The Regional Health Authorities are responsible for surveillance activities for detection of WNV in adult mosquitoes and sentinel and Corvid species and humans with assistance from each jurisdiction,	support	support	lead (jointly with PHSA and province)	lead (jointly with RHA); fed support	ongoing

⁵ ‘Sensitive areas’ include environmentally sensitive locations (eg. wells, apiaries, registered organic farms, watercourses and fish habitat) and/or community areas (eg. schools, permitted adult and child care facilities, hospitals and seniors group homes.)

Task	Responsibility				Timing
	Municipal	GVRD	RHAs	Prov/Fed	
D. Integrated Management for Larval Control					
1. Each jurisdiction should make adequate preparations for larval control of vector mosquitoes.	lead	lead	order or recommend	lead	ongoing
2. On the order or recommendation of the Regional Health Authority, each jurisdiction should undertake a program of larval control at designated hotspots, including catch basins.	lead	lead	order or recommend	lead	ongoing
3. Each jurisdiction should, over time, consider modification of hot spots by physical or mechanical means to reduce their viability as mosquito breeding habitat (with caution to avoid disruption of sensitive habitats.)	lead	lead	support	lead	ongoing
4. The Regional Health Authorities should facilitate the use of the provincial pest control permit in managing hot spots including catch basins.	support	support	lead	support	complete in April 2004
5. The Regional Health Authorities should ensure that there are appropriate protocols in place to facilitate access for inspection, surveillance, monitoring and control of mosquitoes for health purposes, including private lands.	support	support	lead	support	complete in 2004
E. Communications					
1. The Regional Health Authorities/Province should prepare public messages on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> private land owners responsibilities general WNV information; strategies for provincial parks; surveillance results; treatment including personal protection, source reduction and adaptive management. 	support	support	lead (jointly with PHSA and Province)	lead (jointly with RHAs); fed support	complete in 2004

Task	Responsibility				Timing
	Municipal	GVRD	RHAs	Prov/Fed	
2. The GVRD should be requested to utilize its communication and education channels to assist the Regional Health Authorities to deliver the public messages across the Lower Mainland.	support	support and request the FVRD to participate	lead	support	complete in 2004
3. Each jurisdiction may supplement the general regional and provincial communication messages with messaging specific to their needs including, where applicable, private land owners.	support	support	lead	support	ongoing
4. The Mosquito Technical Work Group of REAC (including the Regional Health Authorities) should continue to act as a focus for information sharing and regional policy review.	support	lead	support	support	ongoing
F. Data Management					
1. All jurisdictions should standardize the collection of mosquito management data so that it is complete, current and useful for management and reporting purposes.	lead	lead	support	lead	complete in 2004
G. Training & Technology					
1. Each jurisdiction should ensure that it is informed and trained on standards for data collection and recording.	support	support	support	province lead; fed support	ongoing
2. Each jurisdiction should support the development of a predictive model that will facilitate the efficient management of mosquitoes for WNV.	support	support	lead	support	complete by 2006

Approved at GVRD Board Meeting March 26th, 2004