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COMMISSIONER

STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12233-1010

SEP 27 2011

Honorable Patricia Ritchie
New York State Senate
317 Washington Street
Room 418
Watertown, NY 13601



Dear Senator Ritchie:

Thank you for your letter regarding Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) concerns in Oswego County. Per your request, this letter explains the steps DEC has taken to assist the County in countering the spread of EEE.

For reasons stated in your letter, several local health departments have, in recent years, increased the use of pesticides to control disease-carrying mosquitoes. DEC has worked closely with both state and county health departments to carry out necessary pesticide applications in a manner benefitting human health, livestock, and the environment. To promote compliance with New York State pesticide laws, DEC has provided technical guidance to local health departments, including Oswego and Onondaga, to assist them in meeting legal notification requirements prior to pesticide application. Guidance has also been provided on how best to inform the public about the application location and the type of pesticide being applied, including any applicable product warnings. All involved agencies have worked together for protection of human health and the environment.

DEC also provides staff to inspect the applicator and equipment verifying that the correct pesticide is being applied, equipment is appropriately calibrated and appropriate application rates are being used. In the most recent case in Oswego County during the month of August, the Department responded immediately to the County's requests for coordination of aerial application approvals and activities. DEC staff worked closely with County officials and both the County and State Health Departments to assure a safe and appropriate response to the declared public health threat. The Department promptly provided detailed maps depicting environmentally sensitive wetlands and wildlife management areas and granted authority to the County for appropriate spraying over state lands.

Oswego County completed their planned series of aerial sprayings on August 26, 2011. We are hopeful that this response provided adequate protection against further EEE impacts. Should further action be necessary, the Department will continue to cooperate with and assist the involved agencies in addressing this problem.

Please call me a (518) 402-8540 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Martens

