

Texas Representative Roberto R. Alonzo's

Capitol Report



Mosquitoes Continue To Test Positive For West Nile Virus in Dallas County

West Nile is a virus carried in birds but can spread to humans by mosquito bites. Infections cause fever and headache in one out of 20 people who are bitten. More severe symptoms include meningitis and encephalitis, which occur in one out of 150 people who become infected

The count of Dallas County mosquito traps testing positive this summer for West Nile virus grew to 172 last Tuesday. County health officials advise all residents to take precautions against mosquito bites by utilizing the '4Ds' to reduce risk of West Nile virus infection.

- **DEET-** Whenever you're outside, use insect repellants that contain DEET, picaridin, or lemon eucalyptus oil
- **DRESS-** Wear long, loose and light colored clothing outside
- **DRAIN-** Remove all areas of standing water in and around your home
- **DUSK & DAWN-** Limit outdoor activities during dusk and dawn hours when mosquitos are most active

Just four human cases of West Nile virus have been reported in Dallas County this year. It is possible that the increase in positive mosquito pools have peaked and prevention measures may be paying off. However, it is still a bit too soon to stop with so many areas still reporting infected mosquitoes.

"Fortunately we've had a mild season as far as virus infection among our citizens. However please remember to continue taking the necessary precautions to protect yourself and remain healthy," urges Rep. Roberto Alonzo

Areas in Dallas will continue to be sprayed for West Nile virus, with the most recent spray taking place last Wednesday and Thursday, within in the 11900 block of Woodbridge Drive (75243). While the insecticide is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for treatment, residents in the areas being sprayed should avoid contact with the spray by staying indoors.



HB9 Aimed to Secure Retirement Funds

As a respected member of the Pensions Committee, Rep. Roberto Alonzo places high priority any issues regarding public retirement systems. During the most recent legislative session, Rep. Alonzo helped author HB9 which addresses contributions to the state employee pensions system.

Ultimately this bill allows for increased state and employee contributions in order to preserve and increase retirement benefits for employees. HB9 called for a 2.3% increase in the amount state employees contribute from each paycheck to a retirement account. Previously, contributions were set at 7.2%, but HB9 raised the amount to 9.5%.

"These necessary changes to state, employer and employee retirement contributions will put the Employees Retirement System on the path to actuarial soundness, helping to ensure that retirement benefits will continue to be provided for all current and future State of Texas retirees," stated Rep. Roberto Alonzo.

HB9 is scheduled to go into effect on Sept. 1, 2015.

Back To School Safety Tips



Monday August 24th was the first day of school for approximately 160,000 Dallas Independent School District students. The majority of these students travel to and from school in a family vehicle, which makes driver and pedestrian safety extremely important. The City of Dallas and the National Safety Council are focused on efforts to educate children and adults on the dangers of distracted driving and walking. Before sending your children out the door to school, take a second to remind them of these year-round safety tips:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Never walk while texting or talking on the phone
- Do not walk with headphones on
- Always walk on the sidewalk when available; if you must walk on the street, face oncoming traffic