

## MOSQUITO ABATEMENT—2004

The 2004 mosquito season began with a number of calls from the American Fork and Pleasant Grove areas. The species causing the problem was identified and a search for the breeding areas was conducted. When the program began in early April the breeding areas for this species had nearly all dried up. The reason this single brooded species was such a problem was that heavy rains and much higher than normal temperatures in mid March permitted larval development and emergence of adults in areas that had not been a problem before. This species has a longer than normal life-span and was collected in light traps well into July. Adult control was initiated earlier than usual to control this species.

The Division had three new field employees. As they became familiar with their assigned areas and the irrigation cycles, especially in pasture lands, their efficiency greatly increased. This was reflected in a steady decrease in the numbers of mosquitoes collected in light traps. Light traps were placed near the breeding areas to give an indication of the numbers prior to their moving into the cities and towns and also an indication of the effectiveness of control activities. Larval control is of prime importance but adult control was carried out in those areas to prevent movement.

Light traps and chicken flocks were placed in areas where there would be maximum potential exposure to West Nile Virus (*WNV*) should it be present. Chicken bloods and light trap samples were collected weekly. There were no positive samples for *WNV* in the chickens, vector species of mosquitoes or the birds of interest called in by residents. Birds of interest that the lab would test were magpies, crows, ravens, blue jays, hawks and owls. Resident notification was greatly appreciated since they were our “eyes”.

All things considered, it was a good year for the program.

Ted Davis, Utah County Mosquito Abatement