

MOSQUITO SPRAYING AND CONTROL

The City of Petersburg conducts mosquito spraying operations during any month in which mosquito activity is detected and sufficient quantities of mosquitoes are active. Spraying normally occurs from April through October each year. Each season we spray from 25-28 times throughout the season. Once frost occurs the population is usually severely reduced and spraying will normally not occur again until the spring rains begin.

Petersburg has two mixing units which are mounted in the back of a pickup and in the back of a 4 wheel Gator. The pickup drives on the main streets spraying while the Gator drives the alleys. Each time the spraying occurs all streets and all alleys are sprayed. The mixing units are re-calibrated each spring before spraying starts.

The active ingredient used in our spray is permethrin which is an extract from the Chrysanthemum flower. This active ingredient is mixed with mineral oil for spraying. We purchase the product in a pre-mixed solution. This product kills ticks, mosquitoes, chiggers, mites, and 55 other types of insects on contact. Many area towns have sprayed malathion for years and the mosquitoes have become resistant to this insecticide. Therefore, we use permethrin.

Spraying is most effective when the mosquitoes are out from cover and actively flying around your home. Therefore, we spray shortly after dusk when mosquitoes are most active provided we have calm enough winds and no rain. This requires our workers to work overtime so many times we will give them their comp time the following day to offset the overtime spraying. Compensatory time is 1.5 times the hours they work as required by federal and state law. It takes two workers to conduct the spraying and approximately 2.5 hours each for them to cover the entire town.

When we are first alerted to the onset of mosquitoes we try to spray 3 times during the first week of the onset. We have found this to be most effective in knocking down the population to a tolerable level. We will never get a 100% kill rate each time we spray. After the initial spraying of 3 times we then monitor the mosquito activity to determine if we have to spray and additional 1-2 times to knock out the first onset.