



# *Parish of Ascension*

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

TOMMY MARTINEZ  
Parish President

## **Tropical Storm Isaac 12** **Mosquito Control Measures Increasing to Battle Post Storm Influx**

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GONZALES – Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez announced this morning mosquito control abatement measures have been increased to counter an expected rise in the numbers of mosquitoes following Hurricane/Tropical Storm Isaac.

“We want our residents to know that the mosquito population will increase because of the amount of water we’ve experienced so far in Ascension Parish,” President Martinez said. “Our parish department will be working around the clock to make sure we counter this increase, head-on.”

Ascension Parish Mosquito Control Department Director David Matassa said spray trucks will spray seven days a week, day and night, until further notice. He said larviciding of ditches will also be increased.

Ascension Parish also has access to a spraying plane, if warranted, through a contract with East Baton Rouge, Matassa said.

“Breeding sites have increased across the parish because the water will help hatch mosquito eggs that have been laying dormant on the ground,” Matassa said. “Eggs can be dormant for up to 20 years. With stagnant water and the right temperatures, it takes anywhere from five days to two weeks for eggs to produce mosquitoes.

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“The bottom line is when you have water saturation like this, the water becomes fuel for the breeding of mosquitoes,” Matassa said. The more water you have, the more mosquitoes you will have.”

Matassa said the parish will also see an influx other species of mosquitoes.

“This happens anytime you have storm winds that blow constantly,” Matassa said. “Other species not native to this parish and region will travel a long way with these winds.

Matassa said residents can greatly reduce the amount of mosquitoes around their property by taking necessary steps to remove standing water sources. He suggests getting rid of old tires, tin cans, bottles, jars, buckets, drums and other containers. Wading pools should be emptied on a weekly basis and stored when not in use.

“The best tip is good housekeeping,” Matassa said. “Residents need to keep their grass cut and keep their yard areas clean. Adult flying mosquitoes frequently rest in grass, shrubbery or other foliage.”

Leaky pipes and outside faucets should be repaired, Matassa said. He said residents need to make sure air conditioner condensation moisture drains properly and does not accumulate. Also, keep downspouts and gutters cleared of debris.

“Believe it or not, most people think they’re not breeding mosquitoes,” Matassa said. “But the majority of people will go out in their backyard and find a container or some type of pot, pan or old tire. These things hold water and breed mosquitoes.”

Matassa suggests that residents with flower pots that have saucers that catch water for the plants should have sand added to the saucers or have the saucers flushed with water. Bird baths should be flushed with fresh water once a week.

Matassa said some mosquitoes are capable of flying up to 15 miles but over 90 percent of the mosquitoes found around a resident’s yard are produced within a quarter mile from their house.

Wearing proper clothing such as long-sleeve shirts and pants, and using mosquito repellent are two suggestions Matassa said are very effective.

For more information, call 225-621-9613.

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“We have a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week, voice mail system, but residents must remember to leave their name and address,” Matassa said.

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