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DIVISION OF MOSQUITO CONTROL

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Resmethrin Fact Sheet
("Scourge[®]")

What is resmethrin?

The above product contains the pesticide resmethrin, a low toxicity compound that is used in very small amounts to control adult mosquitoes. Resmethrin is not residual (does not last long) and is applied with specialized equipment in a manner that maximizes mosquito control but minimizes the impact on other organisms. The product is included in the insecticides recommended for adult mosquito control list produced by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

How does resmethrin work?

Resmethrin is a synthetic version of natural pesticides produced by certain chrysanthemums. The product disrupts nerve transmissions of target organisms. In mammals, the product is broken down quickly.

Is there danger to humans from this chemical?

Resmethrin has very low toxicity for mammals. During mosquito control operations, the product is applied at ½ to 3 ounces per acre. The insecticide is mixed with an agent that makes it more effective, called a synergist (piperonyl butoxide), so that only 0.02 to 0.12 ounces of insecticide are actually applied per acre.

How is resmethrin applied?

Resmethrin is put out using Ultra Low Volume (ULV) equipment that produces droplets that are about 5 – 25 microns in size. There are 24,000 microns in an inch. In Morris County, we have found that the application rate of 1 ounce per acre is adequate for mosquito control. Resmethrin is broken down very rapidly after application, and must contact flying mosquitoes directly to kill them.

Is resmethrin harmful to other insects?

Other insects may be harmed by resmethrin, but generally not at the rate at which mosquito control operations apply this product. Even very sensitive honeybees are not harmed when Scourge 4 + 12 is applied at 10 times the label rate.

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How can I avoid exposure to resmethrin?

Exposure to resmethrin, even during spray operations, is minimal for the general public because of the small quantities used. There are, however, steps that can reduce this exposure even further:

- Note contact information regarding spraying in newspapers, published every 23 days during the mosquito season. Local municipalities may also be contacted, since spray activities are coordinated with them.
- Plan your activities to limit time spent outside during times of possible pesticide treatments (when mosquitoes are very high in number, and usually in the evening).
- Move your pets, their food, water dishes inside during a ULV application.
- Stay away from application equipment, whether in use or not.
- Whenever possible, remain indoors with windows closed and with window air conditioners on non-vent (closed to the outside air) and window fans turned off during spraying.
- Avoid direct contact with surfaces that are still wet from pesticide spraying. Do not allow children to play in areas that have been sprayed until they have completely dried (approximately one hour). Very little settling of a ULV spray takes place, however, so the chances of contacting resmethrin this way is minimal.
- If you must remain outdoors, avoid eye and skin contact with the spray. If you get spray in your eyes or on your skin, immediately flush and rinse with water.
- Move children's toys out of application areas.

What are symptoms of exposure to resmethrin?

Symptoms of exposure can include an asthmatic reaction or a skin rash. Resmethrin is related to chrysanthemums, and some people are allergic to them. The chance of experiencing these symptoms of exposure with proper use is extremely low. You should contact your physician, other medical providers or the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES) at **1-800-222-1222** if you experience these symptoms following a pesticide spraying.

Where can I get more information on resmethrin?

For overall pesticide-specific information – 9:30am to 7:30pm:
National Pesticide Information Center: 800-858-7378

For pesticide health information & possible exposures – 24 hours:
New Jersey Poison Information & Education System: 800-222-1222

For New Jersey pesticide regulation & misuse complaints:
NJDEP Pesticide Control Program: 609-984-6568

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Where can I get more information about local mosquito control?

The Morris County Division of Mosquito Control: 973-285-6450 or www.morrismosquito.org

For state-wide mosquito control information:

NJDEP Office of Mosquito Control Coordination: 609-292-3649

For Federal insecticide regulation:

USEPA Region 2 Office of Pesticide Programs: 732-321-6768

Spraying for adult mosquitoes is a last resort. Most mosquito control work goes on “behind the scenes”, using water management, fish, and products to control immature mosquitoes in the water where they begin their life cycle. Controlling adult mosquitoes is more difficult because they are spread out and moving.

If you have questions about resmethrin or any other mosquito control related products or practices, please feel free to call the Morris County Division of Mosquito Control at (973) 285-6450, or visit our web site at www.morrismosquito.org