

## MOSQUITO CONTROL IN RHODE ISLAND, 1956-57

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Mosquito control in Rhode Island is handled under the Public Laws of 1954, as amended, Chapter #3366.

Under this act, a city or town may set aside certain sums of money for mosquito control. Request is then made to the state for participation in the State Matching Fund Program, whereby each city or town is reimbursed for money spent. This is done on a percentage, based on the amount of state funds voted by the legislature, but not to exceed \$3,000 to any city or town in any one fiscal year.

There are seven cities and 32 towns in the state. Seven cities and 20 towns are in the program. The 12 remaining towns do no control work at all. You can appreciate our problem when the uncontrolled land area is 630.19 sq. mi. and the controlled area is only 480.81 sq. mi.

*Culex pipiens* and *Aedes sollicitans* are still number 1 and 2 on our list of pest mosquitoes.

Mosquito control has been practiced in Rhode Island since the early 20's when work was done in and around Providence under the direction of Prof. Frederic P. Gorham of Brown University. He also conducted surveys for the City of Newport at the request of the Chamber of Commerce.

Since the end of W.P.A. all control work is done under State Department of Agriculture and Conservation supervision. Ninety percent of our work is basic; ditching, draining and water control, with about 10 percent spraying wherever other methods cannot be used.

The greatest achievement in our control efforts was reached during the days of W.P.A. when the most notable project was the corrective work done on Prudence Island in the township of Portsmouth, R. I.

The greatest contribution in 1956 was

the cleaning up of about 125 acres of filthy, mucky, state-owned marsh land, and turning it into a well-kept bird sanctuary that can be traversed by foot from one end to the other. This area is at Galilee, in the town of Narragansett, R. I.

The greatest contribution that is being made by the state is the matching fund program. The state also maintains a year-round crew, supplemented by a summer crew to do control work on state-owned lands. It also aids cities and towns with technical and supervisory help through its Division of Entomology and the State Mosquito Control Supervisor.

The Northeastern Mosquito Control Association has just had a successful annual meeting in our capital city—Providence—and from this meeting and the knowledge gained from the various speakers, the Rhode Island Budget Commission has seen fit to recommend a 60 percent increase in our matching fund program.

During the year 1956 we were stricken with the dreaded eastern equine encephalomyelitis. There were no recorded human cases, although 2 were suspected.

Here are some figures compiled for 1955 and 1956, on encephalitis in Rhode Island:

	1955	1956
Humans	0	0
Birds	—	801
Horses	15	8
Game farms	6	2
Horse and pony farms	15	8
Wild pheasants	3	0

I feel that all state agencies—district, sectional or regional-abatement groups, development associations, and others interested in mosquito control—should bring pressure to bear upon the Federal Government for research work to be done on eastern equine encephalomyelitis as to its cause, its effect on man, and what, if anything, can be done as a preventive measure.