



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Hunterdon Hosts Critical Mosquito Insecticide Resistance Training Conference



The Hunterdon County Division of Health, in conjunction with the NJDEP, hosted a two day training conference July 19-20, attended by over sixty mosquito control specialists from counties around New Jersey, as well as from several states, that explored mosquito insecticide susceptibility and resistance, Hunterdon County Freeholder Matt Holt announced at the August 1 Freeholder meeting.

“Mosquitos are more than just pests. Suppression of the mosquito population is an important public health activity, particularly in light of the growth of the Zika virus and many other infectious diseases that pose threats to the population at almost every stage of life. Determining which insecticides are effective and safe is vital to this effort. We are proud that Hunterdon County has served as a catalyst for this important training,” Holt said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) mosquitoes are known to carry many infectious diseases from several different classes of microorganisms, including viruses and parasites. Mosquito-borne illnesses include malaria, West Nile virus, elephantiasis, dengue fever, and yellow fever.

Hunterdon County Health Division Director Tadhgh Rainey and Dr. John Petersen, a Visiting Faculty member, at Rutgers Center for Vector Biology, formerly of the extension faculty of Florida A&M University and a Hunterdon County Health Department staff member, provided hands-on training for the group. “It’s not often that we have access to the talent and experience of an individual such as Dr. Petersen. His background as a medical entomologist along with his career in Central America and Florida have benefited our group tremendously,” Mr. Rainey stated.

According to Rainey, “the training is designed to better understand the susceptibility and resistance of mosquitoes to public health insecticides. Mosquito populations from New Jersey and surrounding states were assessed. Attendees from Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey sent representatives to for

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training in the 'bottle bioassay' technique, a tool developed by the Centers for Disease Control for monitoring insecticide resistance within local mosquito and insect populations."

"Insecticide resistance can be very focal, and this training has helped assess the effectiveness of our products at the local level," commented Scott Crans, Administrator of NJ DEP's Office of Mosquito of Mosquito Control Coordination. "It's important to understand the susceptibility of local disease-carrying mosquitoes to the control tools we have."

Funding for the training initiative was provided through a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.