

**Metropolitan  
Mosquito Control District**

**Executive Committee**

January 25, 2023

9:15 AM

*Information Packet*

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**METROPOLITAN MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT  
MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**

**COMMITTEE:**        **Executive Committee Meeting**  
                          **Metropolitan Mosquito Control District**  
                          2099 University Avenue West  
                          St. Paul, MN 55104

**DATE:**                **Wednesday, January 25, 2023**  
**TIME:**                **9:15 AM**

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**A G E N D A**

1. Approval of Minutes November 17, 2022 Meeting\*
2. Legislative Update – (Peg Larsen, Kim Scott)
3. Budget and Levy Development Schedule
4. Insurance Liability Waiver\*
5. Change Statutory Language\*
6. Executive Director Search Hiring Committee
7. Executive Director’s Report
8. Other Issues
9. Adjournment

\* Action Requested

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Commissioner Mike Gamache    | Anoka County      |
| Commissioner Tom Workman     | Carver County     |
| Commissioner Liz Workman     | Dakota County     |
| Commissioner Keving Anderson | Hennepin County   |
| Commissioner Rena Moran      | Ramsey County     |
| Commissioner David Beer      | Scott County      |
| Commissioner Fran Miron      | Washington County |

**Next Commission Meeting: Wednesday, February 22, 2023, 9:15 a.m.**  
**Next Executive Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 22, 2023, 9:15 a.m.**

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METROPOLITAN MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 17, 2022  
9:15 AM

Vice Chair Gary Kriesel called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

**Roll Call:**

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Commissioner Robyn West     | Anoka County      |
| Commissioner Tom Workman    | Carver County     |
| Commissioner Liz Workman    | Dakota County     |
| Commissioner Nicole Frethem | Ramsey County     |
| Commissioner David Beer     | Scott County      |
| Commissioner Gary Kriesel   | Washington County |

**Staff:**

Stephen Manweiler, Executive Director  
Arleen Schacht, Business Administrator  
Cassie Sweeney-Truitt, Administrative Assistant

**Visitors:**

Kim Scott, RCS Consulting  
Joe Langel, MMCD Legal Counsel

Vice Chair Gary Kriesel welcomed all in attendance and thanked them for attending the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes for September 28, 2022, Executive Committee Meeting**

Commissioner Nicole Frethem offered the following resolution and moved its adoption.

**Resolution 1:**

**Resolved,** that the September 28, 2022, Executive Committee Meeting minutes be approved as presented.

Commissioner Liz Workman seconded the motion. Vice Chair Gary Kriesel asked all in favor to say “Aye” and those opposed to say “No.” The resolution was approved unanimously.

## **Intergovernmental Issues**

### **Minnesota 2022 General Election Results**

The Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (DFL) swept the general election with Governor Walz winning his re-election over former state Senator Scott Jensen and his running mate, former Vikings player Matt Birk, and the Democrats taking control of both bodies in the Legislature. All 201 legislative seats in the state were up for election. After redistricting earlier in the year, about two dozen races were considered competitive, with many of the suburban areas around the Twin Cities being battlegrounds.

The DFL also won all the constitutional offices, including, attorney general, state auditor, and secretary of state (all incumbents).

The Democrats now hold complete control over state government in a “DFL trifecta” for the first time since 2014. Based on current results, the DFL will have a narrow 70-64 majority in the House and an even narrower one seat 34-33 majority in the Senate.

The Twin Cities suburbs were the top voting bloc in the state (larger than Greater Minnesota and Minneapolis/St. Paul) with abortion being the top electoral issue, inflation and democracy coming in second, and crime, a more distant third.

Two House races, both long-time DFL seats on the Iron Range, flipped to Republican by a narrow enough margin to trigger an automatic recount of the votes. In District 3A, Roger Skraba leads incumbent DFL Rob Ecklund by 15 votes and in District 3B, the longest serving current legislator (46-year incumbent DFL member Mary Murphy) is down by 35 votes to Natalie Zeleznikar. This was also one of the few split districts where the DFL candidate won the Senate seat while the Republican candidates, pending results of the recount, won both House seats.

### **Legislative demographics:**

There will be a combined 65 new members between the House and Senate with 19 new Democrats and 25 new Republicans in the House, and 14 new Democrats and 9 new Republicans in the Senate.

It will be the state’s most diverse Legislature with 35 of the 201 members of the Legislature being people of color. The House will also have its first openly transgender person to serve in the Legislature and the first lawmaker from Generation Z, four women of color newly elected to the Senate, including the first Black woman elected to the Senate and the first woman of Somali heritage elected to the Senate, the first Black Republican man to serve in the House since the 1980s, the first nonbinary legislator in Minnesota (elected to the House), 11 legislators belonging to the LGBTQ community—a doubling of the current LGBTQ representation.

Minnesota garnered national attention for its divided government over the last four years (the only other state legislature in the country operating under a divided government is Virginia). With this DFL trifecta, Gov. Walz will have an easier time pushing his agenda through the

Legislature, he will have less concern over his commissioners being fired by the Senate, and much more control over how to spend the record \$9 billion dollar budget surplus that was left on the table when the Legislature adjourned last May. The slim majorities in the Legislature are expected to have a moderating effect on final outcomes. Additionally, with the uncertainty of the global economy, much of the new spending may be one-time spending or tax relief. DFL leaders have previewed their priorities including codifying abortion rights and paid parental leave and the broader spending priorities of funding for classrooms, health care, and public safety.

Legislative leadership:

Most committee chairs have yet to be named, but the Minnesota DFL Senate Caucus elected longtime Minneapolis Senator Kari Dziedzic as Senate Majority Leader. Sen. Bobby Joe Champion, also from Minneapolis, was elected as Senate President; he will be the first Black person to serve as Senate President. Longtime environmental advocate and state senator of 36 years, John Marty, will be the powerful Finance Committee Chair, and seasoned tax legislator Ann Rest will lead the key Tax Committee. The Senate DFL leadership has been criticized for a lack of geographic diversity, they hold few seats outside of the Twin Cities metro area and none with any seniority. Senate Republicans chose Sen. Mark Johnson, from far northwest Minnesota, as their Minority Leader; current Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller did not seek the post.

The DFL House caucus reelected Rep. Melissa Hortman as their Speaker, Rep. Jamie Long as Majority Leader, and Rep. Athena Hollins as Majority Whip. The House Republicans elected Rep. Lisa Demuth as their Minority Leader over Kurt Daudt; DeMuth will be the first biracial person to hold this position. Other than Speaker Hortman, the slate of legislative leaders is entirely new.

Districts that are split, reflecting swing districts/key swing votes:

District 3, on the Iron Range: Senate=Grant Hauschild (DFL); House districts were both flipped to Republican (contingent on the recounts); 3A=Roger Skraba (current Mayor of Ely), 3B=Natalie Zeleznikar [all newly elected legislators]

District 4, Moorhead/Clay County in western Minnesota: Senate=newly elected Rob Kupec (DFL); House districts are split: 4A=Heather Keeler (DFL), 4B=newly elected Jim Joy (R)

District 7, also on the Iron Range: Senate=newly elected Rob Farnsworth (R) (this was Sen. David Tomassoni's seat); House districts are split: 7A=Spencer Igo (R), 7B=Dave Lislegard (DFL)

District 14, St. Cloud: Senate=Aric Putnam (DFL); House districts are split: 14A=newly elected Bernie Perryman (R), 14B=Dan Wolgamott (DFL)

Final election results for statewide races:

- GOVERNOR: DFL Gov. Tim Walz (52.3%) wins over Republican Scott Jensen (44.6%)
- ATTORNEY GENERAL: DFL A.G. Keith Ellison (50.4%) wins over Republican Jim Schultz (49.6%)
- SECRETARY OF STATE: DFL Sec. Steve Simon (55%) wins over Republican Kim Crockett (45%)
- STATE AUDITOR: DFL Auditor Julie Blaha (47.5%) wins over Republican Ryan Wilson (47.2%)

See also: [2022 Election Directory for the 2023-2024 Minnesota House](#)  
[2022 Minnesota Senate Election Directory](#)

Some of Gov. Walz's key cabinet members will not be returning: Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm, Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington, Education Commissioner Heather Mueller, and Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Commissioner Mark Phillips have decided to leave their positions. Sixteen cabinet members will carry over and they will be looking to fill vacancies at the Department of Revenue and the Department of Labor and Industry.

Important Upcoming Dates:

The DFL House and Senate will release the committee structure for the 2023 legislative session by December 3.

January 3, 2023: 2023 Legislative Session commences.

Legislative leaders say that the upcoming legislative session will be in-person, but likely to offer some testimony via remote options.

### **Approval of the Updated MMCD Purchasing policy**

Arleen Schacht reported that the current MMCD Purchasing Policy was designed to satisfy the requirements of Minn. Stat. 471.345. A recent review of the policy and current statute language revealed that the decision threshold amounts in the current policy are below the same thresholds in current statute language. We believe the MMCD Purchasing Policy should be updated to agree with the current statute language.

Commissioner Liz Workman offered the following resolution and moved its adoption.

**Resolution 2:**

**Whereas**, the current MMCD Purchasing Policy contains threshold values based on Minn. Stat. 471.345 that are lower than the current language in that statute and,

**Whereas**, the current MMCD Purchasing agreement language otherwise continues to satisfy Minn. Stat. 471.345,

**Resolved**, that the Commission approves the following MMCD Purchasing Policy that includes threshold values from the current language in Minn. Stat. 471.345.

Commissioner Tom Workman seconded the motion. Vice Chair Gary Kriesel asked all in favor to say “Aye” and those opposed to say “No.” The resolution was approved unanimously.

### **Approval to Remove Committed \$1,000,000 for the Anoka Lease Bond**

Arleen Schacht reported that in 2013 the Commission approved a resolution that committed \$1,000,000 to early retirement of the Anoka Lease Bond.

The Anoka Lease Bond payments began in 2007 with the last payment scheduled to be made in February 2023. Based on the financial situation at the time the resolution was approved in 2013, the request for committing fund for early retirement of the bond made sense. However, the years 2014 – 2016 proved to be very high service demand years with expenditures exceeding revenues by nearly \$6M using much of the reserves available, eliminating the opportunity to take advantage of the early retirement of the bond. As of 2023, the District will have fulfilled the lease obligation and it is no longer necessary for the Fund Balance to include the \$1,000,000 committed funds.

Commissioner Nicole Frethem offered the following resolution and moved its adoption.

#### **Resolution 3:**

**Whereas**, the proposed Fund Balance Policy of the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District meets the needs of District operations providing information on the committed components of the Fund Balance,

**Be it resolved**, The Metropolitan Mosquito Control Commission modifies the Fund Balance by removing the committed \$1,000,000 for the early retirement of the Anoka Lease Bond.

Commissioner Tom Workman seconded the motion. Vice Chair Gary Kriesel asked all in favor to say “Aye” and those opposed to say “No.” The resolution was approved unanimously.

### **Executive Director’s Report**

Stephen Manweiler reported that he and Arleen are assembling resources to support her as the Interim Executive Director beginning on December 24, 2022. References developed for orienting a new Executive Director also will support the Interim Executive Director. These references include Commission needs and history. The other three managers (District Operations Manager, Technical Services Manager, Public Affairs Manager) also will support both the Interim Executive Director and new Executive Director. Stephen’s goal is to provide Arleen with everything she needs to lead MMCD.

After communicating with three professional recruiters, we have chosen DDA Human Resources, Inc. (based in Wayzata, Minnesota) to find our next Executive Director. Their all-

inclusive fee was the lowest. They explained how their experience placing Watershed District Executive Directors demonstrates that they understand how to fill positions with unique experience requirements (biological and managerial) like the MMCD Executive Director. They project being able to present screened candidates for the MMCC to choose from in April 2023.

### **Other Items**

Stephen Manweiler reminded everyone that during the October 26 Commission meeting we decided to convene this November 17 Executive committee in person based upon Covid transmission and risk. We also agreed to review the situation at this meeting (November 17) to decide how to meet on December 14. Stephen reported that current Covid transmission is about the same that it has been since the beginning of October and proposed convening the December 14 Commission meeting in person at MMCD's St. Paul headquarters. No Commissioners objected. Several asked if we could have a hybrid or remote meeting if severe weather hampered in-person attendance. Joe Langel stated that notification of any off-site participation would need to be posted at least three days before the meeting. We will hold the December 14 Commission meeting in person unless a significant increase in Covid transmission or severe weather occurs. We will determine any change by December 11 to satisfy the posting requirements.

### **Adjournment**

Vice Chair Gary Kriesel asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Tom Workman moved that we adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Liz Workman seconded the motion. Vice Chair Gary Kriesel asked all in favor to say "Aye" and those opposed to say "No." The motion was approved unanimously. Vice Chair Gary Kriesel declared the meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.



## Metropolitan Mosquito Control Commission Meeting

### January 25, 2023

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Informational:**

Budget and levy development schedule

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**Background:**

In 2015 and 2016, there were questions about when, during the season, specific decisions about the District's budget and levy must be made. These questions arose during a time when the MMCC was deciding how to balance District resource and funding needs (levy) relative to service demand and reserves (fund balance). See page 8 for a schedule outlining steps to be taken by staff and the Commission to develop the 2023 levy and budget. Months or specific dates are taken from the 2022 Commission meeting schedule.

An initial review of legislative requirements and deadlines (see page 9) revealed that the MMCC must approve a preliminary tax levy for the following year by August 1 of the current year. The July Commission meeting is the closest meeting before this deadline. In 2022, the MMCC approved a preliminary 2023 levy at its July 27 meeting.

Both the 2023 levy and 2023 budget were approved by the MMCC at its meeting on December 14, 2022.

This information is being presented here both for review and to determine if modifications to the schedule can facilitate the levy and budget development process while satisfying statutory requirements.

## **MMCD Calendar for Budget Year 2024**

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|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Commission and Executive Committee provide direction to develop budget   | May / June 2023        |
| Commission approves preliminary 2024 levy and budget direction           | July 26, 2023          |
| Approved proposed levy deadline for the District                         | August 1, 2023         |
| Review 2024 budget and levy proposals                                    | August 23, 2023        |
| Proposed levy certification due  | September 10, 2023     |
| Executive Committee reviews proposed budget (Subject to change)          | September 27, 2023     |
| Commission reviews proposed budget (Subject to change)                   | October 25, 2023       |
| Executive Committee reviews budget                                       | November 16, 2023      |
| Parcel Specific Property Tax Notice                                      | November 10 – 24, 2023 |
| Commission adopts Final 2024 Levy & Budget (December Commission meeting) | December 20, 2023      |
| Truth in Taxation Hearing (Commission & Staff)                           | December 20, 2023      |
| Continuation Hearing, if necessary (Commission & Staff)                  | December 20, 2023      |
| Certify Adopted Payable 2024 Levy (Staff)                                | December 21, 2023      |

## MEMORANDUM

TO: MMCD Board of Commissioners

FROM: Joseph Langel, MMCD Attorney

DATE: August 26, 2016

RE: Tax Levy Schedule

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At the Commission meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup> (2016), there was a discussion about the budget calendar. Specifically, questions were raised about when MMCD's property tax levy must be certified to the Commissioner of the Department of Revenue. The calendar in the Information Packet showed that the initial levy certification deadline is August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Some Commissioners questioned the validity of that date given that it is earlier than other taxing districts. A quick review of Minnesota Statutes chapter 275 (the property tax levy statute) indicated that (1) MMCD is defined as a special taxing district; and (2) "each special taxing district shall adopt and certify to the county auditor a proposed property tax levy" "on or before September 15." *Minn. Stat. §§ 275.065, subd. 1(b), 275.066 (16)*. It therefore appeared that September 15<sup>th</sup> is, in fact, the correct deadline.

The quick statutory review during the meeting, however, did not reveal the additional provisions in Minnesota Statutes chapter 473, which relate specifically to MMCD. Section 473.711, subdivision 5, provides that MMCD "must certify its property tax levy to the Commissioner of Revenue by August 1 of the levy year." This specific provision overrides the more general provision in Chapter 275.

The Commissioner of Revenue reviews the tax levy to ensure that the tax is within MMCD's statutory levy limitation. That determination must be completed by September 10<sup>th</sup>. *Minn. Stat. § 473.711, subd. 5*. The Commissioner notifies the MMCD that the levy is appropriate and provides the amount of levy for each member county. The levy data is transmitted to the respective counties by September 15<sup>th</sup>. The Commission adopts the final levy and holds the Truth in Taxation hearing in December.

Let me know if anyone has additional questions about this process.

## Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Commission Meeting

### January 25, 2023

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Action requested:**

Determine whether to waive statutory tort limits

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**Background:**

The District has obtained insurance coverage (General Liability, Property Casualty, Worker's Compensation, etc.) through the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for several years.

When renewing liability coverage, the District needs to decide whether or not to waive the statutory tort limits to the extent of the coverage purchased. The decision to waive or not to waive the statutory limits has the following effects:

If the District does not waive the statutory tort limits, an individual claimant would be able to recover no more than \$500,000 on any claim to which the statutory tort limits apply. The total which all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would be limited to \$1,500,000. These statutory tort limits apply regardless of whether the District purchases the optional exceptional liability coverage.

If the District waives the statutory tort limits and does not purchase excess liability coverage, a single claimant could potentially recover up to \$2,000,000 on a single occurrence. The total all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would also be limited to \$2,000,000 regardless of the number of claimants.

If the District waives the statutory tort limits and purchases excess liability coverage, a single claimant could potentially recover an amount up to the limit of the coverage purchased. The total all claimants would be able to recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would also be limited to the amount of coverage purchased, regardless of the number of claimants.

- The District has traditionally not waived the statutory limits.
- The limits currently are \$500,000 / \$1,500,000.

**Resolved,** that the District not waive the statutory insurance liability limits.

## Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Executive Committee Meeting

January 25, 2023

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Action requested:**

Approve proposed amendment to statutory language requiring the MMCD Director be an entomologist.

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**Background:**

At the January 5, 2023, Board meeting, the Commissioners discussed the Director recruitment efforts and the existing statutory requirement that the Director be an entomologist. The consensus was that an entomology background should no longer be a required condition of employment. Changing the requirement requires a statutory amendment by the Legislature.

The current statutory language (Minn. Stat. § 473.704, subd. 3) is as follows:

“Subd. 3. **Director; to be entomologist.** It may employ and fix the duties and compensation of a director who shall develop the control programs of the district and shall supervise its execution; such director shall be an entomologist.”

The proposal is to remove the phrase, “; to be an entomologist” in the title, and to remove the phrase, “; such director shall be an entomologist” in the body of the subdivision.

Staff is seeking authority to work with MMCD lobbyists Peg Larsen and Kim Scott as well as legislative staff to submit a bill for this amendment, or alternative language.

**Resolved,** that District staff undertake efforts to submit a bill to change the statutory language to remove the requirement that the MMCD Director be an entomologist.

## Metropolitan Mosquito Control District Executive Committee Meeting

January 25, 2023

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**Requested by:**

Arleen Schacht

**Action requested:**

Hiring Committee

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**Background:**

On October 20, 2022, at a Special Executive Committee meeting, the committee moved to approve that a professional recruiter be hired to help find the next Executive Director for MMCD.

After review, the proposal from Pat Melvin, with DDA Human Resources, Inc. was chosen. The firms' successes with recruiting/hiring City Administrators, Watershed District Administrators, and the like, makes DDA a good fit to assist with the search for the next MMCD Executive Director.

Included in the proposal was a timeline of the process to help manage time and stay on track. The first item on the timeline was for Mr. Melvin to meet with staff and the hiring committee, which is to be comprised of MMCC Commissioners. These meetings are intended to provide Mr. Melvin the opportunity to gather all pertinent background information and identify what MMCD is looking for in the next Executive Director. Mr. Melvin has met with the staff from the management team and human resources.

At this time, it is necessary for the MMCC to determine which commissioners will make up the hiring committee, that will work with Mr. Melvin on deciding the next MMCD Executive Director. Once the hiring committee is decided, a time will be set up for each hiring committee member to meet with Mr. Melvin discuss the position, the needs of MMCD and set schedules for applicant reviews and interviews etc.

**To: Commission Members**  
**From: Arleen Schacht**  
**Re: Executive Director Report**  
**Date: January 2023**

## **1. DIRECTOR'S INITIATIVES**

Pat Melvin, with DDA Human Resources Inc., the recruiting consultant hired by MMCD to conduct the search for next Executive Director, met with the management and HR staff to gather insight on the skills, knowledge and experiences, staff believe would be valuable in the next MMCD Executive Director. The next steps include determining a hiring committee and posting the position in a variety of publications and mediums by mid-February.

Recruiting efforts are underway for the 2023 seasonal employees. We plan to post initial advertisements for seasonal technician positions early-February with employment beginning in April. All COVID safety requirements have been removed but we continue to encourage employees to stay home when they are sick and support those employees that still prefer to wear masks. We receive CDC updates twice per month and will continue to monitor the COVID rates within the District and make changes as necessary.

## **2. MOSQUITO CONTROL SERVICES**

The weather so far this winter has been very snowy. The snow events that occurred have moved the metro from severe/extreme drought in December to moderate drought in January (droughtmonitor.unl.edu). It will be interesting to see how wet or dry the wetlands will be in the spring.

Field staff are currently working on reviewing the data from the 2022 season and updating their maps; attending District meetings to address any issues that were identified during the 2022 season; and working on their required annual training, including reviewing District procedures, safety, and OSHA requirements. These meetings and annual trainings will ensure that that they are prepared for the upcoming season.

Field staff are also busy planning for the recruitment of seasonal staff. They are attending job fairs and planning different ways to try to attract more seasonal workers. Seasonal jobs will be posted in early February.

## **3. MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE**

We are currently reviewing and analyzing data collected in 2022 and we are preparing to combat mosquito-borne illnesses in 2023. We are making plans to reduce the risk of West Nile virus, La Crosse encephalitis, western equine encephalitis, eastern equine encephalitis, and Jamestown Canyon virus by controlling vector populations.

Drought conditions were suitable for some West Nile virus (WNV) vectors in 2022 but not for the primary human vector. There were 19 WNV illnesses documented in Minnesota residents, two in District residents. Surveillance by MMCD detected WNV in 42 of 617

mosquito samples tested. West Nile virus positive mosquitoes were collected in all District counties except Carver County. Nationally, 1,035 WNV illnesses and 175 WNV positive blood donors have been reported to CDC. Fatalities were reported in 79 of the WNV illnesses.

There were three La Crosse encephalitis (LAC) cases in Minnesota in 2022, one a resident of Hennepin County. Field staff at MMCD recycled 11,753 tires and eliminated 1,179 other small mosquito habitats in 2022 as the primary method for reducing LAC risk.

There were eight Jamestown Canyon virus (JCV) illnesses confirmed nationally in 2022. One was reported in Minnesota, a resident of Ramsey County. Wisconsin led the nation with four JCV cases in 2022.

Only one eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) illness was reported to CDC in 2022, in Wisconsin. Additionally, there were veterinary reports of illness from 22 counties in six states. There were no EEE detections in Minnesota in 2022. The *Culiseta melanura* population was low in the District in 2022; there were no EEE positive mosquito samples among the four tested by MMCD.

#### **4. TECHNICAL SERVICES LAB**

In December and January, lab staff finished identifying and inputting data from our New Jersey Light trap samples. We began writing the surveillance chapter of the report to the Technical Advisory Board for 2023. This chapter summarizes all the surveillance data for larval and adult samples collected in the summer. We summarize weather conditions, larval abundance and frequency of occurrence, and using adult sampling data, we create seasonal and geographic displays of the abundance of our most common species. Then we are responsible for editing and compiling the report. Also, we are identifying mosquito species in samples saved from this summer and will be submitting specific spring *Aedes* species for Jamestown Canyon virus testing. We will also be subsampling nontarget invertebrate samples collected for the Black Fly Control Program.

#### **5. PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

##### **Website Improvements**

The MMCD Communications Team is currently working on improvements to the website including a more detailed and easier to navigate employment page, several blog posts to increase web traffic, and improved public notification tools.

Recently Kathy Beadle from the East facility wrote a blog post about what MMCD field staff do in the winter: <https://mmcd.org/2023/01/09/what-do-mmcd-field-staff-do-in-the-winter/>

##### **School Presentations**

MMCD continues to be active in local schools around the Twin Cities delivering presentations to students from 3rd grade through high school. In mid-December we



partnered with Anoka-Hennepin Schools Community Education to run a week-long workshop of education about mosquitoes, ticks, and more at various elementary schools.

### **County Presentations**

We are working with clerks and administrators to schedule MMCD presentations during a commission meeting for each county. These will provide brief updates on 2022 with a look ahead to 2023 and some introductory information about MMCD for newly elected county commissioners. Please contact Alex Carlson if you have comments about what should be featured in the update for your county.

## **6. TICK-BORNE DISEASE**

### **Manuscript to the Journal of Medical Entomology**

A revised version of the manuscript of results of thirty years of tick surveillance has been turned in to the Journal of Medical Entomology for review.

### **Collaborations with Other Agencies**

*School of Public Health, U of MN* - Dr. Jon Oliver gave the dataset of our tick surveillance to his student, Jacob Classen. He has been working on various items such as associating our larval deer tick numbers with weather patterns, average numbers of deer tick nymphs on mammals with tick-borne diseases, and more. He hopes to have this work published later this year.

*Public Health Agency, Canada* - Our tick data set has also been provided to Dr Nicholas H. Ogden and colleagues of the Public Health Agency of Canada, National Microbiology Laboratory. They plan to use the data and combine various variables across time.

*Jeff Bender, Veterinarian Epidemiologist (U of MN)* - SARS in mice. Samples from mice are being taken weekly which will be tested for SARS-CoV-2 as part of a multi-year project. While not directly relevant to MMCD's mission of protecting the public from tick-borne disease risk, we do feel it very relevant to what is currently happening in the world!

*Centers of Disease Control* - The CDC is developing a laboratory technique which will identify deer ticks. Last fall, MMCD sent the first Minnesota-collected ticks to the CDC. We collected additional ticks for the CDC this year.

### **Surveillance for the Asian Longhorned Tick (*Haemaphysalis longicornis*) Continues**

Collaborative efforts across the state of Minnesota - Agencies involved are Indian Health Services (northern MN), Minnesota Board of Animal Health, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Minnesota Department of Health, Metropolitan Mosquito Control District, University of Minnesota, and the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota. No Asian longhorned ticks have been found in Minnesota.

**Technical Advisory Board (TAB) Report**

Data through week 24 has been compiled and Chapter 3 of the TAB report has been updated. Mammal and tick identifications and data entry through week 27 will be updated in Chapter 3 when available.

**Public Education**

*Social media, tick alerts.* We will inform our Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/Tik Tok followers of items of interest as they occur. Our estimate of current deer tick activity levels is updated during tick questing periods on our website via the Tick Risk Meter.

Signs to remind the public of deer ticks and disease prevention measures were posted at dog parks and additional locations throughout the metro. For various reasons some signs remain up year-round.