

# Pesticide

Continued from page 1

shell disease and egg mortality, we believe, is a direct result of this environmentally questionable practice.”

Rich Fuka, president of the Rhode Island Fishermen’s Alliance, Chris Brown, president of Rhode Island Commercial Fishermen’s Association, and Dennis Ingram, a board member of the Ocean State Fishermen’s Association, all agree. Rhode Island fishermen want the state to stop using larvicide pellets in catch basins and storm drains that empty into Rhode Island waters until conclusive scientific data is available declaring the chemicals safe.

Newport City Council member Charles Y. Duncan recently sent a fax to the Newport mayor asking for a resolution to be put on the next city council meeting agenda that bans the use of any of the toxic poisons, such as methoprene, in the mosquito abatement program. He suggested that the city look to less invasive methods of mosquito control. The results of the council’s decision were not available at press time.

## DEM response

DEM Associate Director of Natural Resources Larry Mouradjian answered questions about the mosquito abatement program and the use of methoprene.

In an e-mail Mouradjian said that every summer DEM and the Department of Health administer a comprehensive program aimed at mosquito control. The program began in 1999. The program includes larvicide distribution to

municipalities.

He also said, “Using mosquito larvicide reduces the possibility that mosquito adulticides would be needed. Mosquito adulticides do have environmental impacts as they can affect non-target organisms. Human health risks are also associated with the use of adulticides.

“Rhode Island DEM makes methoprene available to municipalities for mosquito control as well as BTI, a benign bacterium specific to killing mosquito larvae above ground.

“One half teaspoon of Methoprene pellets are distributed to most underground storm water catchment basins monthly for four months by community department of public works workers that we train,” Mouradjian said.

He explained that two identical training sessions are held each spring for municipal employees. Most employees who make the applications attend a session every two years and learn about any new developments. “All municipalities in total have been trained,” Mouradjian said.

He also outlined the training program. “The training entails several speakers speaking on the topics of: Pesticide usage and safe pesticide handling, mosquito larval habitats and diseases, pesticide toxicology and modes of action, and laws, licensing, and regulatory issues.

“Each community has a mosquito control contact person that is to document to DEM’s mosquito abatement office the monthly applications that are made in their community. Al-



Rhode Island lobstermen believe lobster numbers are down in the Narragansett Bay because of runoff of a pesticide used to kill mosquito larvae in storm drains.

Photo by Robb Roach

though documentation received back by DEM is incomplete, each community receives only that amount proportional to the number of catch basins in their community.”

Mouradjian explained that methoprene pellets sink, and are very unlikely to be flushed out of a basin, based on an experiment conducted by DEM in 2000. He said there was no evidence that methoprene affects lobsters in nature.

“Fish have a different structure and I know of no impacts on their developmental processes,” he added.

Mouradjian stated, “Various research documents have raised questions on the potential off-

site movement and impacts of methoprene and like products. Lab research has shown ‘dosage’ impacts on developing lobsters, which demonstrates if unnaturally high concentrations of methoprene were to occur in the presence of developing lobsters damage could be observed. Lab tests only have documented this as far as I know.

“DEM has on two separate occasions in years past consulted with URI and other scientific partners to review the scientific literature and the possibilities of damage outside the catch basins.

“Tests were done to measure the chemical concentrations seen outside the basins and all concluded with the results that no

detection was determined beyond very short distances so the ‘risk’ was judged negligible to organisms beyond the mosquitoes in the catch basins. DEM provides very clear and definitive directions for use by the communities so that the impact work and the use are in alignment,” Mouradjian stated.

When asked if the DEM is doing anything to assure that the health of the fishery is not at risk, he said “DEM will again be reviewing methoprene use to understand the alternatives products, advances in scientific data and cost/benefit to the program.

“We will provide improved directions, alternative products or other program enhancements as deemed best. Disease monitoring continues to document presence of EEE, West Nile and other critical pathogens as present in our communities and this too must be factored.”

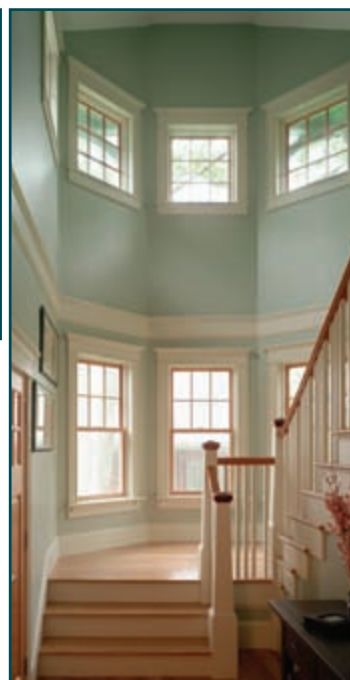
When asked about the chances of an EEE or West Nile Virus epidemic if the mosquito population isn’t controlled, he said that EEE and WNV risks are higher with higher mosquito populations and added that the risk is difficult to quantify.

Jamestown has participated in the state program since its inception, but the town does not monitor specific results. “We rely on DEM,” Public Works Director Steve Goslee said. “There was a public hearing before the program started when DEM came to the Town Council.”

See next week’s Press for the results of a University of Rhode Island study on the use of the larvicide.

# GORGEOUS HIGHLAND MEADOW MANOR

## \$1,795,000



Gracefully set on almost .40 acres on a quiet cul-de-sac close to town and Mackerel Cove, this handsome 4,500 sq. ft. shingle-style home is bordered by a natural buffer. The award-winning property has lovely exterior detail and landscaping, a beautiful interior with custom finishes, a fabulous kitchen with honed granite counters, a family room, sun room and living room, each with a stone fireplace and, a master bedroom suite with a deck. A lower level living area is perfect for an au pair or guest suite with full height windows in the bedroom and, a media/exercise room. The detached two-car garage has an office and powder room and, the ability for expansion.

For more information or an appointment to preview this exceptional property, please call Gloria Kurz, Listing Broker at 225-0000.

**“WE MAKE DREAMS COME TRUE, ONE HOME AT A TIME”**

7 FERRY WHARF  
JAMESTOWN, RI 02835  
401.423.7000

**Mansions  
& Manors.**  
*The Personalized Real Estate Service*

59 BELLEVUE AVENUE  
NEWPORT, RI 02840  
401.848.5555

[www.mansionsmanors.com](http://www.mansionsmanors.com)