



For Immediate Release  
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## Canadian Coalition for Health and Environment Urges Halt to Malathion Fogging in Winnipeg *Winnipeg Director Jailed for Standing up for Public Health*

Watch Winnipeg, after Canadian Coalition for Health and Environment (CCHE) Secretary Glenda Whiteman was jailed for blocking malathion fogging for "nuisance" mosquitoes in the early hours of Tuesday morning (July 20). Whiteman was seriously abused, physically and verbally, for standing up for public health.

Winnipeg has many mosquitoes, although virtually every chemical available is used to kill mosquitoes, at all stages of life. "Mosquitoes rapidly become resistant to the chemicals, and their populations rebound more quickly than do predator populations (dragonflies, amphibians, fish, birds, bats). A treadmill of frequently repeated, less effective fogging evolves," said Dr. Meg Sears, of the Coalition for a Healthy Ottawa.

Helen Jones, a Health Educator in Halifax said, "I am appalled that a city government could show such disregard for public health. At best, adulticiding is recognised as an ineffective control measure, according to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Malathion has been banned in Sweden because of its health risks, and epidemiological research in Canada shows it can severely depress immune system function. The IARC lists malathion as a possible carcinogen. This class of chemical impairs development of the nervous system. Is this what the children of Winnipeg deserve?"

Other Canadian jurisdictions, in the face of West Nile virus, encourage breeding site reduction and personal protection, and may resort to least-toxic larvicides. WNV was not yet detected in Winnipeg.

"Fogging may even increase the risk of West Nile virus. Malathion harms both human and animal immune systems and nervous systems, leaving all creatures at greater risk of developing serious disease. People and the environment suffer, and the virus can build to dangerous levels," Sears explained. "Ottawa applied methoprene and Bti larvicides in 2003. When there was human WNV disease the Health Department distributed information to the neighbourhood, urging them to be extra careful. Ottawa has a registry of households with environmental sensitivities requiring extra notification."

The CCHE formed in 2002, around the issue of insecticides in response to West Nile virus. WNV has since moved across the country, but most jurisdictions have responded with public education regarding breeding site reduction and mosquito avoidance. Some jurisdictions are using limited quantities of least-toxic larvicides. The CCHE urges an ecological response to WNV, recognising that many creatures are much better at "controlling" mosquitoes than are people.

**For more information, please contact:**

Meg Sears (M.Eng., Ph.D.) Ontario Spokesperson

613 832-2806