

BASIS STATEMENT FOR ADOPTION OF CMR 01-026, CHAPTER 20—SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Basis Statement

Surveillance data from the last decade show that mosquito-borne viruses are on the increase in Maine. The first confirmed human case of West Nile Virus in Maine was documented in 2012. Maine's Arboviral Illness Surveillance, Prevention and Response Plan is based on a national model and is similar to most other states. That plan calls for the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention to recommend adult mosquito control programs in targeted areas of the state if the threat of mosquito-borne disease reaches the "high" or "critical" phase. Conducting these programs would not be feasible under current state law. Chapter 20 requires authorization from each individual property owner which would be impractical for wide-area programs conducted in residential areas. The proposed amendment to Chapter 20 relaxes the need for individual property owner authorization when the Maine CDC recommends spraying due to vector-borne disease threats.

No changes were made to the amendments based on comments received.

The majority of comments received during the comment period indicate that many people have concerns about wide-area spraying of pesticides for control of mosquitoes. The Board also has concerns, but concluded that its role has never been to determine whether pests should be controlled with pesticides. Rather, the Board's role has always been to ensure that applicators are appropriately trained and to prescribe best practices for the application of pesticides. The Board would like to emphasize that it is not recommending spraying, but is amending its rules to make urgent public health related spraying feasible if Maine's public health officials determine that control of adult mosquitoes is in the best interest of the state.

Findings of Emergency

The Board finds that the potential hazard arising from a mosquito-borne disease outbreak in Maine involving either West Nile Virus or Eastern Equine Encephalitis poses an imminent threat to public health, safety and welfare, thus creating an emergency within the meaning of 5 M.R.S. §8054. Consequently, the Board determined it was appropriate to promulgate an emergency rule under 5 M.R.S. §8052 in case the need for spraying arises during the summer or fall of 2013, since legislative review of the proposed amendments will not occur until the winter of 2014.

Impact on Small Business

In accordance with 5 MRSA §8052, sub-§5-A, a statement of the impact on small business has been prepared. Information is available upon request from the Maine Board of Pesticides Control office, State House Station #28, Augusta, Maine 04333-0028, telephone 207-287-2731.