STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- CONTROL OF MOSQUITOES AND TICKS

Introduced By: Representatives Craven, McEntee, and Caldwell

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Title 23 of the General Laws entitled "HEALTH AND SAFETY" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

CHAPTER 7.2

CONTROL OF MOSQUITOES AND TICKS

23-7.2-1. Short title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Control of Mosquitoes and Ticks Act."

23-7.2-2. Declaration of policy.

The state supports programs to control the diseases carried by mosquitoes and ticks. These programs are most effective when they adhere to the following principles:

(1) Mosquitoes and ticks carry diseases that present serious risks to the public health of those living and visiting Rhode Island.

(2) Rhode Island maintains a mosquito control program that appropriately focuses on prevention. This focus on prevention is consistent with federal guidance from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention promoting integrated pest management and integrated mosquito management strategies.

(3) Application of pesticides to control adult mosquitoes is best reserved as a control method of last resort. Controlling adult mosquitoes via large scale spraying of insecticides kills beneficial insects, is inconsistent with organic farming/gardening and is less cost-effective than
1 prevention strategies.

(4) Tick-borne disease presents a significant health risk in Rhode Island. Compared to the problems of mosquitoes and mosquito-borne disease, little attention is given to the control of ticks and tick-borne disease.

(5) Pets are vulnerable to some mosquito-and tick-borne diseases.

(6) The state's ad hoc mosquito-borne disease advisory group demonstrates that state agencies are capable of convening scientists to provide credible, accurate advice for the purposes of developing sound, cost-effective policies.

(7) Private pest management professionals offer mosquito/tick control services to their clients. These activities are not tightly regulated and their impacts uncertain. Pest management professionals could benefit from specific training on mosquito/tick control and from credible, practical guidance from the Rhode Island departments of health and environmental management.


(a) The departments of health and environmental management shall submit an annual report on the status of mosquito-borne disease and its control in Rhode Island. This report shall guide the state's plan for mosquito control activities.

(b) The departments of health and environmental management shall submit an annual plan for the control of mosquitoes and the diseases they carry. The plan shall describe prevention activities, such as the application of larvacides by municipalities, the status of the state's mosquito surveillance network and the state's protocols for using these surveillance data to guide responses to increased risk of mosquito-borne disease.

(c) The departments of health and environmental management shall submit an annual report and an annual plan on the control of ticks and the diseases they carry. This report and plan can either be separate from or included as part of the mosquito report and plan required in subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

(d) All reports required in subsections (a), (b) and (c) of this section shall include an opportunity for public input and provide guidance to individuals and pest management companies regarding mosquito and tick control.

(e) Municipalities shall review these department reports to determine opportunities available to reduce these risks.

23-7.2-4. Responding to threats of mosquito- and tick-borne disease.

(a) The mosquito control plans required in § 23-7.2-3(b) shall include protocols regarding emergencies that warrant spraying insecticides over large areas. These protocols shall include methods for determining the effectiveness of the insecticide application and whether it achieved a
sustained reduction in the risk of disease.

(b) When public funds are used for aerial spraying of pesticides or other emergency response activities, twenty percent (20%) of these funds shall be set aside to expand routine mosquito surveillance capacity to allow assessments to determine whether the emergency action achieved any sustained reduction in mosquito-borne and tick-borne disease risk.

23-7.2-5. Promotion of integrated pest management practices in the private sector.

(a) The department of environmental management shall expand the categories of applicator certification under § 23-25-10 to include a certification for mosquito and tick control.

(b) All pesticide control applicators certified pursuant to chapter 25 of title 23 shall add a surcharge of five percent (5%) to all mosquito and tick control services rendered. These surcharges shall be paid to the department of environmental management and shall be distributed to municipalities to support prevention activities related to mosquito and tick control.

(c) This section shall not apply to any applicator employed by the state or any of its subdivisions.


Nothing in this chapter shall prevent the director of health in an extreme emergency to the public health from exercising powers provided in §§ 23-1-20 through 23-1-23.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.
This act would establish a program to control mosquitoes and ticks by the departments of health (DOH) and environmental management (DEM) to coordinate the state's response to combatting the spread of mosquito-borne and tick-borne diseases.

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