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A quarterly publication from the Ada County
Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement Department

A Message From the Director:

Fiscal Year 2010 was an interesting year for Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement, serving as an example of how much the weather affects our day-to-day operations. Last year's fickle weather was both a blessing and a curse; the wet spring impeded the work our weed and pest crews could accomplish while the late summer delayed mosquito hatches, resulting in a decline of mosquito species infected with the West Nile virus.

Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement is gearing to release its FY10 Annual Report that showcases the department's accomplishments and successes from over the last year. Highlights of that report are outlined in this edition of Nuisance News.

Looking forward, I can confidently say I have never been more excited and energized to direct this unique county department. Some significant changes include:

- Streamlining department operations by using cutting-edge technology to manage daily workflow processes
- Implementing new vehicle routing software that will be used to more efficiently route crews to their destinations, eliminating wasteful drive-time, reducing vehicle maintenance, and, most importantly, cutting fuel costs. We received a grant for this project, so it comes at no cost to Ada County taxpayers this year.
- Consolidating two upper management positions into a one - tapping the experiences of one of our more accomplished staff to direct the three divisions within our department. (More of this on [P. 5.](#))

- Developing a more effective way of tracking, recording and inventorying weed enforcements found across the roughly 1,055 square miles of Ada County land.

These are just highlights of the many changes happening within the upcoming year. I look forward to directing the future of this vital county department and ensuring we continue to provide you, the Ada County taxpayer, with services that make our county the great place to live, work, and play! For more information about what we do and the services we provide, I invite you to explore our Web site. In the meantime, thank you for your interest in our department operations, and feel free to contact us with any questions you have.

Sincerely,

Brian Wilbur, Director
Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement
Web: www.adaweb.net/weedpestandmosquitio.aspx
Phone: 208-577-4646





FY 2010 Weed Control Division Accomplishments

Though the wet, windy spring hindered the work our Weed Control crews could tackle in early Fiscal Year 2010. However, FY10 statistics showed increases in inspected sites and total treated acres. During FY10, Ada County Weed Control completed **827** work orders, inspected **1,363** sites for noxious weed species, and treated almost **6,000** acres for noxious weeds. FY 10 also saw a dramatic increase in the department's enforcement and control division.

Weed Control By Fiscal Year



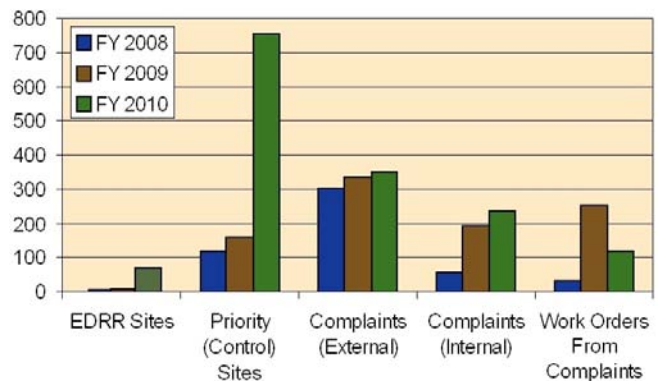
Ada County Weed Control's obligations are established by federal, state, and local laws. The county weed authority is responsible for tracking, managing, and controlling noxious weeds throughout the 1055 square miles of Ada County land. As of FY 2010, Idaho officials have identified 64 noxious weed species, and Ada County Weed Control has inventoried 57 of those species locally.

Idaho agriculture authorities and Ada County both have divided these weed species into three categories - each which have specific control requirements. This tiered system is intended to get resources where they are needed most - battling front lines of new weed infestations.

If a weed is new to an area or found in only small, localized patches, that species is listed in the highest control category, EDRR, or "Early Detection Rapid Response." These weeds must be reported to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture within 10 days after being positively identified, and control efforts must begin in the same season they are found. The next noxious weed category, "Control," are species that may already exist in some parts of the state or county, and the county weed authority must reduce infestations within five years. The last category of weed control is "Containment" which means Ada County Weed Control must ensure the established noxious weed populations are contained.

As you can see from this graph, county efforts in identifying and controlling the highest priority weed categories has skyrocketed in FY10.

Weed Enforcement / Control By Fiscal Year



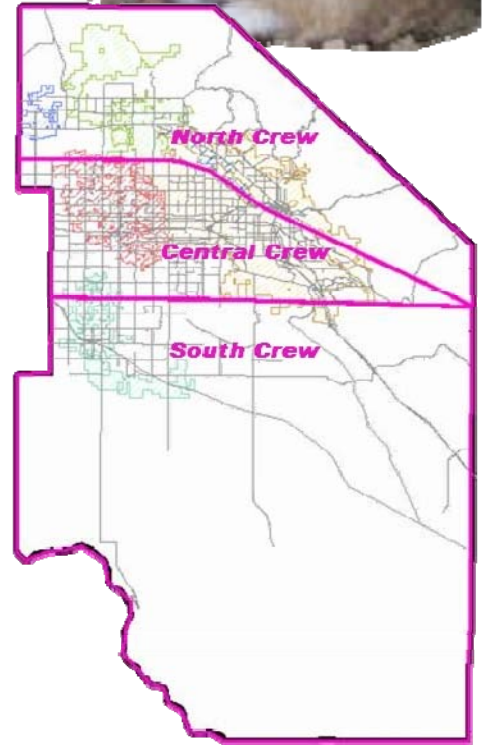
To learn more about the noxious weeds found in Ada County, visit www.adaweb.net/weedcontrolguide. This PDF document takes time to download. The handy guide is filled with detailed photographs and tips on effective mechanical and cultural weed control methods as well as a chemical control timeline.



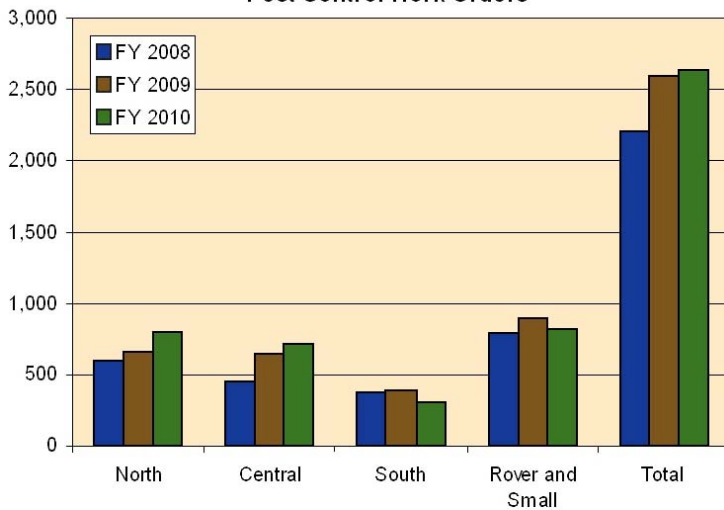
FY 2010 Pest Control Division Accomplishments



Ada County Pest Control crews work typically from February or March to the end of November to rid acreages located in unincorporated Ada County from agricultural pests including gophers and rock chucks. The county is divided into three areas (North, Central, and South), and a crew is assigned to cover work orders in each of those areas. There are two additional crews to handle small land parcels less than 2 acres and a "rover" crew that deals solely with rock chuck work orders.



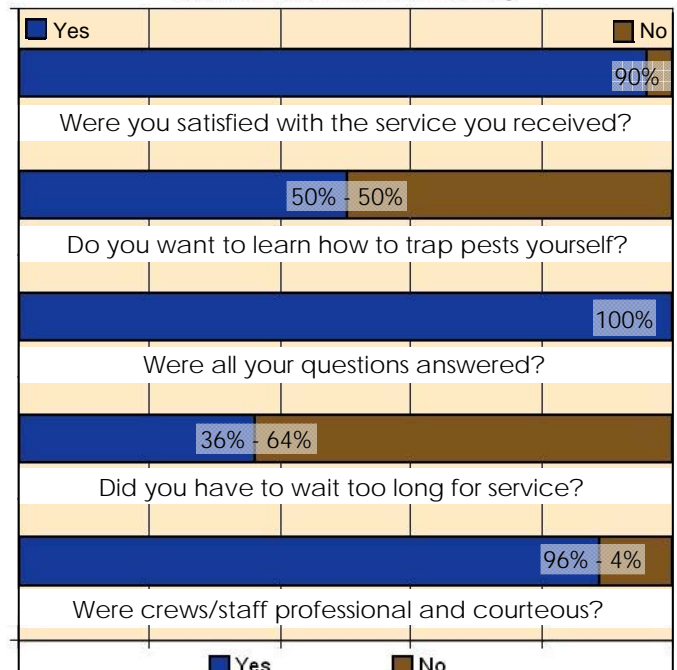
Pest Control Work Orders



Fiscal Year 2010 was busy and productive for our pest crews. FY10 saw the earliest start date when crews were first dispatched beginning the first week of February. The division received 2,204 requests for service, and worked more than 42,000 acres throughout the eight-month season.

In September, Ada County Pest Control staff initiated a telephone survey asking randomly selected clients their opinion about the service they received. The chart to the right highlights results from the 50-person survey. This survey tool helped the division gauge not only customer satisfaction, but also to determine the level of interest residents might have for learning how to control gophers or rock chucks on their own in the future.

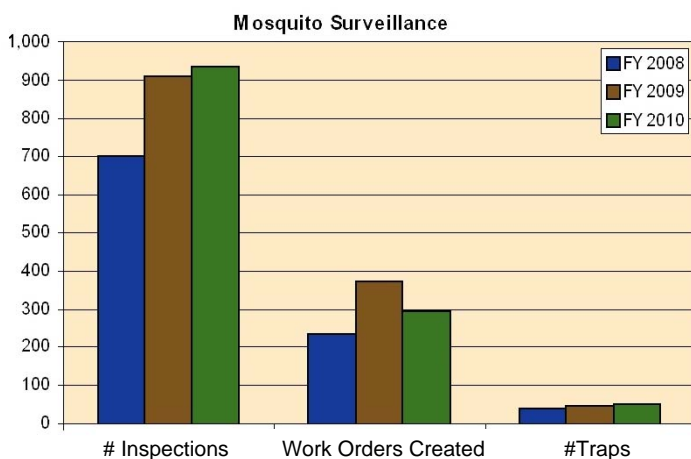
2010 Customer Satisfaction Survey



FY 2010 Mosquito Abatement Division Accomplishments

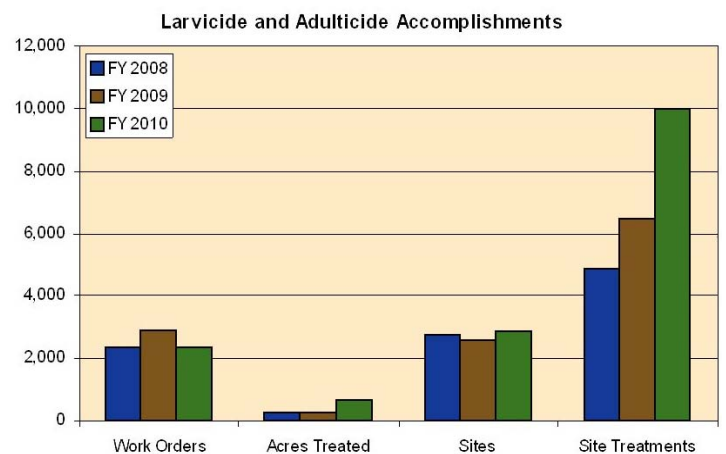


Ada County's Mosquito Abatement division is really three distinct units: surveillance (and testing), larviciding, and adulticiding. In FY 2010, Ada County monitored 54 trapping locations throughout the county to help crews identify the species of adult mosquitoes buzzing around and to detect the presence of West Nile virus (WNV). Findings of these surveillance efforts and test results were posted online to help residents determine whether West Nile was found in their neighborhoods. In FY10, the cold, wet spring gave mosquito hatches a late start, which delayed the emergence of West Nile. In the event a vector mosquito, possible of carrying and transmitting the West Nile virus, or trace of West Nile is found in one of the surveillance traps, larviciding and adulticiding applications are increased for one mile surrounding the trapping location.



While surveillance is the first line of defense in protecting residents against the West Nile virus, preventing young mosquitoes from growing into flying, biting and potentially disease-carrying adults is the second step. Larvicide crews worked every day during the summer and in FY10, crews monitored and mapped over 2,500 known aquatic breeding locations for mosquito larva. These sites included storm drains, catch basins, lakes, ornamental ponds in public areas and other areas of standing water. If larva were found, crews treated the water with a biological agent that stunts the growth of the young mosquitoes so they don't mature into adults.

It's not possible to prevent mosquitoes, and it's also impractical to try and eliminate all mosquito populations each summer. So the last phase of an integrated pest management plan for mosquitoes includes adulticiding. Ada County treats adult mosquitoes using ultra-low-volume fogging trucks. When used at label rates, the pesticide is nontoxic to humans, pets, animals, or larger insects. Crews are dispatched to work during evening hours when the *Culex* mosquito (the primary vector for West Nile virus in Ada County) is out flying. *Culex* species are known to be active between dusk and dawn. These adulticiding efforts do not affect "daytime biters," or mosquitoes active in daylight.



In FY10, Ada County inspected and treated approximately 58,000 acres of land for larva and adult mosquitoes.



Department Staff Changes



Jack Bennett, retiring Mosquito Abatement Field Operations Manager, first became active with the county's mosquito abatement district in 1998 by joining the Mosquito Abatement Board of Trustees panel. At the time, the panel was the governing body for a mosquito abatement district. (That panel is now the Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement Advisory Committee.) In March of 2001, Jack became the director of that board. Three years later, in 2004 he started working full time for Ada County.

As the field operations manager for the county's Mosquito Abatement division, Jack is responsible for managing all day-to-day operations including: supervising operations as outlined in the strategic plan; contributing to policy regarding surveillance, adulticiding, and larviciding efforts; managing enforcement of mosquito abatement statutes; setting the division's budget; recommending mosquito abatement public relations and community education programs; and supervising employees in their work and licensing.



Lyle Larkin, retiring Weed and Pest Field Operations Manager, worked as a temporary employee for several seasons before starting full-time with Ada County in early 1988. As the field operations manager, Lyle is responsible for directing assigned portions of the countywide noxious weed control program; managing Weed Control and Pest Control personnel; providing professional advice regarding the control and management of most general vegetation and all designated noxious weeds; setting the weed and pest divisions' budgets; contributing to the department's strategic plan; ensuring compliance with state, federal, and local noxious weed laws; and supervising the coordination of weed mapping and the county's enforcement/control operations.



The department has now melded these two management positions into one general field operations manager being filled by the department's Mosquito Surveillance Coordinator, Desiree Keeney. Desiree brings vast experience to this position where she will now be responsible for managing assigned portions of the noxious weed control, pest control, and mosquito control divisions; supervising staff; developing strategic action plans; setting budgets; and directing policy as the department moves forward and continues to streamline its operations.

