



WILLIAM A. COLTON
47th Assembly District
Kings County

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August 4, 2011

Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene
125 Worth Street, Room 331-CN 28
New York, NY 10013
Attn: Commissioner Thomas Farley

Dear Mr. Farley,

Constituents have brought to my attention their concerns regarding the spraying of pesticides throughout New York City to kill mosquitoes.

Will there be spraying in the areas of Bensonhurst and Gravesend in Brooklyn, which are part of my district? Are there any precautions being taken to protect children and senior citizens? Are there any precautions being taken to protect the waters in Gravesend Bay and the backyards of residents, especially those who own swimming pools? What pesticides are being used in the spraying?

There have been reports indicating these pesticides may cause adverse side effects to some persons, especially seniors and children. Is there any evidence that the pesticides being sprayed in New York City may cause asthma to develop or trigger asthma attacks? Are there any reports that the pesticides have caused irritation and tearing of the eyes, respiratory irritation or stomach irritation, including nausea, cramps, or vomiting? Is there any evidence that the pesticides being sprayed in New York City may cause cumulative, multigenerational or degenerative impacts on human health, especially in the development of children? Is the Department of Health recommending that people should stay inside, turn off their air conditioners, and bring backyard equipment inside during the spraying?

Some constituents have claimed that new generations of mosquitoes may be immune to such chemicals. After previous spraying of pesticides in New York City, have the newer generations of mosquitoes been more immune to the pesticide spraying? Is there any evidence that the spraying has killed off the natural predators of mosquitoes? Is there any evidence that the pesticide spraying is ineffective in reducing the number of the next generation of mosquitoes? Is there any evidence that the pesticides being sprayed make it easier for organisms to contract or transmit West Nile Virus?

I am seriously concerned about the questions being raised by my constituents, and I believe that the spraying should be investigated to ensure that it is safe. If the pesticides being sprayed could indeed cause harm to humans, I believe that the Department of Health should no longer continue the spraying. Instead, I believe that the Department should use safer alternatives to address the mosquito problem.

I await your timely response to the many concerns of my constituents.

Very truly yours,

Assemblyman William Colton

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