



## DEPARTMENT REPORT

October 2017

### Agriculture

A member of our staff will travel to Irvine this month to participate in California Department of Pesticide Regulation hosted structural pest control enforcement training. This training will help refine skills associated with inspections and investigations of structural pest control companies such as those that work in residences, institutional facilities, and schools.

October is also the month that Agricultural Commissioners representing each of the 58 California counties travel to Sacramento to meet at the request of the Secretary of Food and Agriculture and the Director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation. In addition to meeting with the Secretary and Director, Agricultural Commissioners spend the week discussing ongoing as well as new and emerging issues, such as regulation of cannabis cultivators.

A likely Africanized honey bee (AHB) hive near Bishop made news in September after two people and their dogs were attacked. Unfortunately, samples taken from dead bees at this site could not be conclusively identified as Africanized by the California Department of Food and Agriculture entomology lab. The Owens Valley has seen several positive AHB colonies over the years, typically in late summer or early fall. AHB has a poor chance of survival in our area if we have sustained cold temperatures through the winter months.

### Agriculture Legislation of Interest

#### AB 861 – Africanized Honey Bees

This bill has been signed by the Governor. The bill gives the authority to a County Agricultural Commissioner to declare the presence of an Africanized honey bee hive a public nuisance, and allows for abatement orders to be issued for such hives. Prior to this bill, there was no legal authority to abate Africanized hives.

### Weights & Measures

Weights and measures device testing is winding down with the completion of livestock scale testing this month. Testing typically resumes in December or January. In the meantime, staff concentrates on training, public outreach, and assembling the coming year's device registration billing for the 1,200 or so weighing and measuring devices used in Inyo and Mono Counties. As always, we continue to conduct fuel quality sampling, complaint investigations, enforcement of labeling laws, and other activities not related to actual device testing.

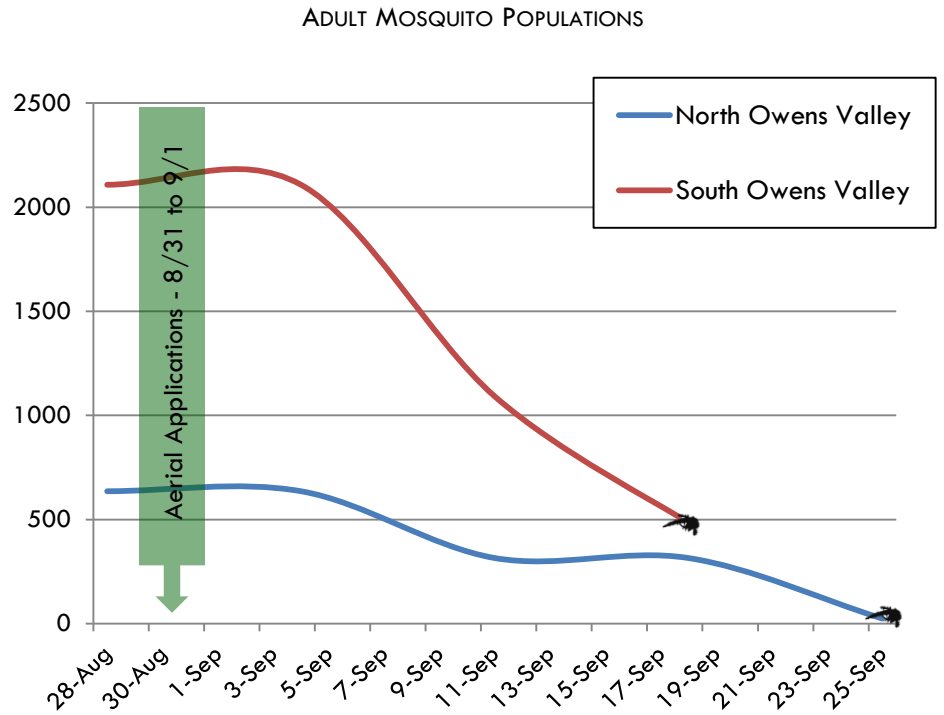
As the weather cools, our office tends to get calls regarding firewood deliveries. In California, all firewood must be sold by the cord unless in quantities less than 1/8 cord. A cord is equal to 128 cubic feet. When measured, firewood must be stacked compactly. It is a violation to sell in less quantity than represented.

Another violation that is common with regard to firewood sales is inadequate information included on receipts, or a complete lack of a receipt whatsoever. If firewood is non-packaged (usually 1/8 cord or more), a receipt must be provided to the customer that has the seller name and address, the date, the quantity of firewood furnished and total selling price. Often, if a buyer calls our office and suspects they did not receive a full cord, they also did not receive a receipt. This makes it very difficult for our investigators to follow up with the seller.

Mosquito Abatement

Mosquito populations have been in sharp decline in September following large-scale aerial control operations and cooler weather. October (generally) signals the end of our busy mosquito season, and we hope that the trend of reduced adult mosquitoes will continue. Since this has been an exceptional and record breaking season, we have elected to keep a few seasonal staff on a bit longer than usual to handle any issues late in the year.

Data on mosquitoes during this extraordinary runoff year is being compiled and will be organized this winter into a report that can be used to help our program during future high runoff years. We are also tracking when and where human disease cases vectored by mosquitoes occurred this year. We hope that this information will help us to predict disease “hotspots” in future years.



Eastern Sierra Weed Management

Some invasive plant management work continues in the Bishop area as well as in the Lower Owens River project area. Program activities will soon shift to maintenance and repair work, reporting, and planning for next season. Despite high water conditions hampering operations throughout this summer, crews were able to access many weed sites to conduct control measures. Weed issues will undoubtedly come to the forefront next spring as seeds and root fragments disbursed by water spreading activities in the Owens Valley, as well as high river and creek levels in Mono County, begin to sprout new invasive plant populations.

October Important Dates

October 3 to 5  
DPR Structural Training  
Irvine, CA

October 16  
CACASA Board of Directors Meeting  
Via Webinar

October 13  
Mosquito Seasonal  
Employment Ends

October 23 to 27  
CACASA Fall Conference  
Sacramento, CA