



June 5, 2019

A.6366 (Thiele)/S. 3069-A (Krueger)

Purpose: Prohibits the use of the chemical Methoprene, trade name ALTOSID, as a pesticide near waters that flow into the Long Island Sound.

Statement of Support: Methoprene, an insecticide which prevents mosquito larvae from maturing into adults, also harms other wetland creatures and marine life during metamorphosis. In the past, the Suffolk County Environmental Quality Board (CEQ) has recommended that it be only used on Long Island in health emergencies, like surges in mosquito-borne West Nile virus, but not to control nuisance mosquitoes, where spraying may be counterproductive and harmful to ecosystems. The CEQ also agreed that mosquito-suppression plans typically fail to make a clear distinction between nuisance control and disease control. Suffolk County has one of the Northeast's most aggressive mosquito-control programs and sprays methoprene widely over its 20,000 acres of wetlands to routinely kill adult mosquitoes – without much analysis of whether such programs are effective.

This is considerable concern from the Long Island fishing industry that non-target crustaceans such as horseshoe crabs, blue crabs, spider crabs, jonah crabs, lobster and grass shrimp may be adversely affected by methoprene as they share some of the same physiological traits as target insects. The National Pesticide Information Center reports that methoprene is moderately toxic to some fish, and highly toxic to others and may accumulate in fish tissues. While we must continue to combat insect-borne illnesses, we must also make sure that we are not doing more harm than good in addressing mosquito populations. Promising research suggests that alternatives to methoprene may exist that specifically target mosquitoes and black flies, but do little harm to non-target species. Ultimately, healthy dragonfly populations may be our best line of defense against nuisance mosquitoes – and harmful methoprene spraying programs are obliterating this potent mosquito-eating insect.

A.6366/S4314 prohibits the use of any pesticide containing Methoprene in any storm drain, water course or fish habitat, in any municipality adjoining the Long Island Sound and the Atlantic Ocean, and their connecting water bodies, bays, harbors, shallows, and marshes. An exemption is provided, however, in an emergency where there is significant threat to public health and immediate mosquito control is required. Connecticut passed a ban on methoprene in 2011. New York should follow suit.

See our video on methoprene here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sRnCjaF3cU>

Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter Strongly Supports This Bill.

