

Ponds A Public Health Responsibility

A pond is a public health responsibility because if it is not properly located, designed, constructed and maintained, it would probably become a breeding place for large numbers of mosquitoes," says Dr. B. B. McGuire, District Health Officer. "Such insects transmit several human diseases, malaria, yellow fever, dengue, filariasis and some forms of encephalitis.

The North American yellow fever mosquito breeds only in artificial containers so no hazard would be created by an improperly built pond, and it is not believed that conditions favorable to the spread of dengue and filariasis would occur as these diseases have not been known to be transmitted in North Carolina.

Malaria, very prevalent in North Carolina, is transmitted by a mosquito which breeds in abundance in poorly-maintained ponds that contain vegetation and sludge. Several types of encephalitis has been spreading to many areas in which they have not formerly occurred. Artificial ponds serve as ideal breeding places for mosquitoes which carry this disease. Malaria can be transmitted from one person to another through the bite of an anopheline mosquito. In North Carolina only one species, the Anopheles quadrimaculatus, can carry this disease. As the Anopheles mosquito is not able to pass the infection from mother to offspring, the only method by which she can become infected is by taking a blood meal from a person suffering from the disease. If an area is free of malaria, the mosquitoes will not become infected, but if an infected person should move into the community or merely stay overnight and is bitten by a malaria mosquito, this mosquito becomes a potential spreader of the disease and may infect several other persons who in turn will infect other mosquitoes. Eventually, the entire community or area may become infected.

Over fifty different types of mosquitoes have been found in North Carolina. They all look no more alike than the various species of birds, but in one way they are alike, all must have water in which

to breed. Some will breed only in receptacles having artificial bottoms—such as tin cans, flower vases, or old rubber tires containing water. Many breed in foul water or water having a high acid content, while others prefer large bodies of reasonably fresh clean water. The malaria mosquito breeds in ponds, ditches, and other bodies of fresh water where the acidity is not too high. Conditions favorable for breeding of malaria mosquitoes are: A constant water level, collections of sludge and other debris, aquatic vegetation which pierces the water surface, little or no wave action, and the absence of natural enemies of mosquito larvae, such as top minnows.

"In recent years, many ponds have been built throughout North Carolina, and in order to prevent certain types of ponds that might invite malaria mosquito breeding (ponds containing constant water level, drift, sludge, or vegetation), a regulation was adopted, requiring the prospective pond-builder to secure a permit from the N. C. State Board of Health. "This law concerns any body of water formed by the construction or excavation of a basin or the obstruction of a stream flow in such a manner as to cause the collection of a body of water which would not have formed under natural conditions. Ponds covering less than 1/4 of an acre are not included in these regulations."

"Before a person can obtain a permit to impound water, he must fill out an application which is submitted to the Engineering Division of the State Board of Health. This application provides for a description of the pond and includes an agreement to comply with the regulations. The local health department, upon receiving information needed which entitles him to build a pond but does not authorize its impoundment. Upon completion of the pond, a representative of the local health department makes another inspection. "If the construction is found to conform with requirements, a written recommendation is sent to the State Board of Health to issue an Impounding Permit. Upon the receipt of such a recommendation from the local



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health department the North Carolina State Board of Health issues the Impounding Permit. This permit can be revoked in the future if the pond is not satisfactorily maintained."

"In the Pasquotank-Perquimans-Camden-Chowan counties Health District during the years 1946-1955 thirteen applications were received and seven impoundment permits granted. Some ponds for which applications were made will never be built; others were not finished in accordance with the requirements. Many ponds have been built in the past year for irrigation purposes.

"On small ponds which have been properly planned and constructed, satisfactory maintenance can usually be accomplished by keeping the shoreline free of drift, sludge, and marginal vegetation. A 'clean' pond, practically eliminates the malaria mosquito breeding problem. A special effort should be made to prevent the introduction of aquatic

plants, such as bulrushes, cattails, and parrot feather. Periodic inspections should be made around the edges of the pond and if aquatic vegetation is found, it should be removed at once to prevent spreading.

"Fluctuation of the water level aids greatly in discouraging the growth of vegetation and should be practiced when the water supply permits. During the winter months the elevation of water in the pond should be held at the maximum until the beginning of the malaria mosquito-breeding season, which is usually around the middle of April or the first of May. Then by dropping the elevation sharply for one or two feet, much objectionable sludge will be stranded. The water should be raised and lowered within the fluctuation limits. By holding it up for about a week, much of the terrestrial vegetation along the margin would be drowned. When it is lowered, the drying out will kill a large part of the

aquatic vegetation. In ponds which are kept clean of vegetation and sludge, small fish, such as the gambusia or top minnow, if kept in the pond in sufficient numbers, will destroy mosquito larvae before developing into adult mosquitoes. Petroleum oils, such as kerosene or No. 2 fuel oil, when applied to the surface, kill all types of mosquito larvae and for that reason are usually preferred."

State Increases Funds For Public Education

Total State funds appropriated for the public schools by the General Assembly of 1955 were approximately 5 million dollars greater

for 1955-56 over 1954-55 and approximately 4 1/2 million for 1956-57 over 1955-56. In other words, the available State funds for 1956-57 will be \$9,584,219 greater than for the year 1954-55.

The greatest portion of the total funds appropriated is for the operation of the nine months school term. This fund was increased more than six million dollars for 1955-56, the increase being based largely on the anticipated increase in public school enrollment for that year.

There was a slight decrease in the amount appropriated for vocational education for 1955-56 over the figure for the preceding year. Decreases were made in appropriations for the purchase of textbooks and buses. For buses, however, an increase was granted for 1956-57. Slight increases were made in the amounts appropriated for State administration in the case of the State Board of Education which includes the Controller's Office and the administration of the State School Plant Construction Fund. In the case of the administration of the State Department of Public Instruction less funds were granted in 1955-56 and increased slightly for 1956-57.

Vets' Question Box

Q—If I take a correspondence course under the Korean GI Bill, at what rate will I use up my GI training entitlement?

A—One-fourth of the length of the course will be charged against your entitlement. If the course runs for two years, for example, you will have used six months of entitlement.

Q—I have just been discharged from military service. What is my time limit for applying for Korean GI insurance?

A—You must apply, and pay your first premium, within 120 days after the date of your discharge.

The great standard of literature as to purity and exactness of style, is the Bible. —Hugh Blair

Identity Of Trees In New Booklet

Want to know how to identify the scores of different trees that grow in North Carolina?

Such information is available in the recently published seventh edition of "Common Forest Trees of North Carolina—How to Identify Them."

The booklet, which contains detailed information and drawings of the various species of trees, may be obtained from the Public Information Office, Department of Conservation and Development, Raleigh. School teachers and librarians may obtain the publication at no cost, but for school children and others a charge of ten cents per booklet is made to cover printing and mailing costs.

School teachers, school children and others interested in the large number of different trees growing in North Carolina will find the booklet a valuable aid in their study and identification of the various species of common forest trees.

Forester Fred H. Claridge says.

When Nature Falls
Summer Boarder—"What a beautiful view that is!"

Farmer—"Maybe. But if you had to plow that view, harrow it, cultivate it, hoe it, mow it, fence it and pay taxes on it, it would look damned ornery."

The end of all learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love and imitate Him.

—John Milton



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