

# WEST NILE UPDATE

## SPRAYING PRECAUTIONS

Anvil (Sumithrin) is the pesticide being used by the city. This pyrethroid-based pesticide is relatively nontoxic to humans and other mammal and health risks associated with the use of pyrethroids in accordance with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and New York State department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) guidelines are negligible.

The Department of Health recommends that all individuals take precautions to avoid direct exposure to pesticides:

Whenever possible, people and pets should stay indoors during spraying with windows closed and air conditioners turned off;

If you have to remain outdoors, avoid contact with the spray. If you get pesticide spray directly in your eyes, immediately rinse them with water or eye drops. Wash skin and clothing exposed to pesticides with soap and water;

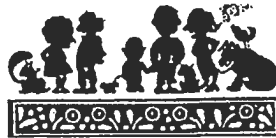
Some individuals are sensitive to pesticides persons with asthma or other respiratory conditions are especially encouraged to stay inside during spraying since there is the possibility that spraying could worsen those conditions;

Anyone experiencing adverse reactions to pesticides should call their doctor or the NYC Poison Control center at 764-7667.

## WHAT IS ANVIL?

The pesticide Anvil was first approved for use by the federal government three years ago although its main ingredient, sumithrin, has been around for twenty years and can be found in scores of household products ranging from pet flea collars to bug spray.

Sumithrin is a synthetic pesticide that mimics the natural pesticide found in chrysanthemum flowers. Piperonyl butoxide, a carcinogenic chemical, is added to make sumithrin more effective.



GRAMERCY PARK BLOCK ASSOCIATION, INC

**Spraying Will Take  
Place  
Thursday 8/31  
From 10 PM  
Till 5 AM  
South of  
23rd Street  
River to River**

## PROTECTION MEASURES

Make sure roof gutters drain properly;

Dispose of tin cans, pots or similar water-holding containers;

Remove all discarded tires from property;

Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered;

Drain water from pool covers;

Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use;

Eliminate standing water that collects on property;

Change water in bird baths once a week;

Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their properties;

Report standing water to the health department on 1-877-WNV-4NYC.

## PERSONAL PROTECTION

If outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and socks;

Consider the use of an insect repellent containing no more than thirty percent DEET for adults and 10 percent DEETS for children. Use DEET according to manufacturers instructions;

Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

# Dead crows in Gramercy Park

By Linda Barr

In a week that saw four dead crows discovered in Gramercy Park, health officials have made no decision on whether to add Lower Manhattan to its pesticide spraying schedule.

To date, the city has restricted spraying of the "relatively un-toxic" Anvil to areas within a two-mile radius of a confirmed West Nile virus outbreak which, so far, has been confined to Central Park in Manhattan, limiting the spraying to the area between 155th and 23rd Streets.

"At this point we have no indication that those birds [found in Gramercy Park] or any others from the area have tested positive," said a spokesman for the City's health department.

"We have been spraying within a two-mile radius of where there has been evidence of West Nile virus, either from a positive pool of mosquitoes, dead birds or live

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ARLENE HARRISON

## Fenced In, Sure, But Not Airtight

ARLENE HARRISON was dispensing information and one-liners yesterday.

The information was that in the last week, four dead crows had been found in Gramercy Park, the fenced-in oasis that begins where Lexington Avenue ends. The one found yesterday was turned over to the Health Department to be tested for signs of West Nile virus.

The one-liners included this one: "These crows didn't need any keys."

Ms. Harrison is the president of the Gramercy Park Block Association, whose 2,000 members live in the 38 buildings surrounding the two-acre parcel with its meandering gravel paths and wrought-iron fence.

"It's easy to say it's not going to happen here, but if you flaunt it and don't do anything, that's not smart," she said. "A crow is not a popular bird in this area, though they have been known to nest here."

## Dead crows

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bird surveillance. The spraying in Manhattan has been the result of findings in portions of Central Park and northern Manhattan.

"At this point, that remains the plan and we will continue to base our [spraying] activities on this. If the tests [on the Gramercy Park] bird comes back positive and showing evidence of West Nile virus, then that will trigger our spraying."

The news has met with mixed reaction in the neighborhood, where some residents are demanding the spraying be extended to the whole of Manhattan and others are concerned about the possible effects of the pesticide.

Arlene Harrison, president of the Gramercy Park Block Association, told how her Association - which represents some 2,000 area residents - had been in constant contact with the City's health department since the discovery of the crows, one of which was picked up by health department workers on Tuesday for tests by the State Department of Environmental Conservation, the results of which could take several days.

Harrison added, "Our Association is in regular contact with building board presidents, building owners and institution heads and,

for the time being, our role will be to provide information to the community.

"The health department will determine if any additional steps need to be taken. The Block Association will endeavor to provide information to the community so that people can act responsibly."

The Association president explained how information of the use of any pesticides, their effects on humans and steps residents can take to eliminate the chance of attracting infected mosquitoes would be distributed over coming days by the GPBA.

Harrison added, "The test results may take up to two weeks and we will do everything possible to get the results to the community as soon as possible."

The virus that has returned to haunt the city after making its first appearance in the western hemisphere last summer when it struck in Manhattan, killing seven people and sickening dozens of others, has, so far, infected three Staten Island residents - a 78-year-old male, 64-year-old female and 63-year-old male have fallen ill with the virus.

Dr Neal Cohen, New York City Health Commissioner, confirmed that the total number of infected birds identified in the city

so far is 44 (five in Manhattan) and 52 pools of mosquitoes have been identified (six in Manhattan.)

The city has set up a special help line to report instances of dead birds or standing water. The number to call is 877-968-4692 (toll free) or log onto the department's website on [www.nyc.gov/health](http://www.nyc.gov/health)

# GRAMERCY PARK BLOCK ASSOCIATION, INC

## WEST NILE VIRUS ALERT

August 26, 2000

Dear Neighbor:

Four dead crows were found in Gramercy Park last week. The NYC Department of Health is testing for West Nile Virus. As soon as test results come in we will get the information out to you. The enclosed articles will provide you with important facts concerning this matter. On August 28<sup>th</sup> the NYC Department of Health will begin a West Nile Virus Surveillance Program to further test for the presence of the virus in our area.

Being vigilant about critical issues that affect our community is what the Gramercy Park Block Association (GPBA) is all about. We have been in regular communication concerning this matter with members of the GPBA Advisory Board, which includes almost every building board president, building owner, and institution head on Gramercy Park. If you have not yet joined your 2000 neighbors who are already members of the GPBA Information Hotline please join us now. Your dues help defray our costs in getting information out to you. The more members we have, the more powerful we will be.

Sincerely,

Arlene S. Harrison, President

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