

APPENDIX 5: FLIES AND BLOWFLIES

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. FLIES

Common house flies (*Musca domestica*) are light grey color with four (4) distinct black stripes on the back of the thorax. The head is dominated by large red-brown eyes surrounded with a light gold stripe. The larvae or maggots are spindle shaped and creamy white. They change into a brown seed-like puparium in which they metamorphose into adults.

House fly infestations lay their eggs into rotting, fermenting organic matter, such as rubbish, manure and soil contaminated with liquid organic matter. The eggs hatch within a day and the larvae burrow into the breeding material. House flies can complete their development in as little as three (3) days, at which time they migrate to drier portions of material in which they are developing. This explains why we sometimes see maggots crawling out of an area in which they are laid, or pupal cases found outside of the food source. House fly infestations feed on a variety of liquid materials and solid foods, which they liquefy with regurgitated fluids. House fly problems have been associated with filth-related diseases.

1.2. BLOWFLIES

An adult blowfly is metallic green, blue, bronze, or black in colour and is slightly larger than a common housefly. The life cycle of the blowfly is fairly simple and quick. An adult female blowfly lays her eggs (up to 2,300) on the flesh of a dead animal. Depending on the species, the larvae will hatch in only a few hours or a few days. The maggots will bury themselves deep in the animal's tissue to feed and go through their three developmental stages. After several days the maggots will leave their food source and enter into nearby soil to pupate. Within a few days, the blowfly will emerge from the soil as an adult, completing the life cycle. Because these flies land on faeces and dead animals they can carry dangerous diseases and bacterium

in their bodies. If they land on human food or food preparation areas they can spread and infect people with some very serious diseases. Blowflies can spread bacterium that can cause severe diarrhea and cholera, along with other pathogens that include plague, anthrax, tularemia, and tuberculosis.

Blowflies are found gathering around animal carcasses or other sources of meat. They are generally the first organisms to infect a dead body or piece of decaying meat. If blowflies are being found within your home it may be because an animal has gotten into your home and died behind the walls or in a crawl space. These pests can also be found infesting areas where there are piles of garbage, piles of decaying vegetation, and animal faeces.

2. MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF FLIES AND BLOWFLIES

2.1. PREVENTATIVE MANAGEMENT

Making some environmental changes and having a professional pest control plan in place can generally accomplish the prevention and control of flies and blowflies. Ensure that household and organic waste is properly secured with a tight fitting lid. To prevent flies and blowflies from getting into a home be sure that all screens in doors and windows are intact and that any gaps or cracks in your home's exterior are properly sealed. Make sure household refuse is being discarded on a regular basis as accumulated refuse is a good breeding site.

2.2. CHEMICAL CONTROL

Larvacides: **Cyromazine** and **triflumuron** may be used to treat refuse sites where flies and blowflies may breed.

Surface sprays: **Pyrethrins** and **imidacloprid** surface sprays may be used.

Space sprays: **Pyrethrins** in aerosols and automatic dispensers may be used.

Getting rid of houseflies in the home chemical-free is easy with some dishwashing liquid and apple cider vinegar. Mix equal parts of water and apple cider vinegar in a glass. Add a couple of drops of dishwashing liquid to it and mix it well. Keep the glass next to fruits/ vegetables or other foods, as required. The sweet smell will attract flies and trap them in the liquid.