



Household & Public Health

Department of Entomology

FLY CONTROL AROUND THE HOME

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FLY SPECIES OF CONCERN

Several species of flies may be encountered around the home. The house fly and various species of blow flies are among the more common of the larger flies. These flies are important household pests, not only because of the nuisance of their flying and buzzing, but because they are strongly suspected of spreading disease-carrying organisms (e.g., bacteria). House flies normally breed in fresh animal manure, but can also breed in decaying organic matter in garbage. Blow flies (bottle flies) usually develop in decaying animal carcasses (such as rodents) and in protein-rich organic matter in garbage.

Smaller nuisance flies, such as fruit flies, phorid flies, and moth flies, may also be seen in and around homes. These smaller flies breed in over-ripened fruits and vegetables, other types of moist, decaying organic matter, and organic debris in clogged and dirty drains.

During later summer and fall, warm winter days, and spring, cluster flies and face flies may become pests in homes. Cluster flies, sometimes called "attic flies," may appear in the fall and winter but are especially active on warm, sunny days in early spring. They buzz around inside the home and collect in large numbers at windows, often in rooms that are not used regularly.

The cluster fly is a little larger and more sluggish than the common house fly. It can be recognized by the short, golden colored hairs on its thorax (that part of the body to which the legs and wings are attached). The larvae, or maggots, of cluster flies develop as parasites in the bodies of earthworms. The adult flies emerge in late summer and early fall, and seek protected places to spend the winter. In many cases, the flies find protection within the walls, attics, and basements of homes. Screens offer no protection because the flies prefer to crawl through small openings found around the building. Then, during the winter and spring, these same overwintering flies get into rooms through window pulley holes, cracks around baseboards, and other small openings.

Face flies are serious pests of cattle and may overwinter in homes and even invade them during the sum-

mer. Obviously, they are more likely to be a problem in rural areas, particularly in homes located near pastures or where cattle are kept. Face flies so closely resemble the common house fly that only an expert can tell them apart. Their overwintering habits are similar to those of cluster flies (i.e., sluggish movement, buzzing, collecting around windows), and control procedures are likewise similar.

CONTROL OF HOUSE FLIES, BLOW FLIES, SMALLER FLIES

Fly Control Outside

Sanitation - First Line of Defense: Insecticides alone cannot be expected to rid premises of flies. Flies breed in wet, decaying organic matter and can complete a generation from egg to adult in as few as 7-10 days, so you must follow sanitary practices to prevent fly breeding. These practices include regular removal of animal/pet wastes, garbage, and all other decaying plant and animal matter. Garbage cans should have tight-fitting lids. Wet garbage should first be wrapped in old newspaper or the like and then put in plastic garbage bags. This makes garbage cans easier to empty and clean, and so means less material to serve as fly breeding sites. Drains should be kept cleaned of any organic debris buildup. Homes should be kept screened during the summer.

Residual Sprays for Outdoor Use: Residual (long-lasting) sprays are useful for killing flies *outside* the home. Areas to be treated include porches, covered patios, garages, breezeways, doghouses or kennels, garbage cans, and similar fly resting places. Surfaces treated should be sprayed to the point of runoff. If picnic tables, benches, chairs, etc., are in the area, cover or remove them before spraying. Pets should be removed from the area before spraying and not allowed to return until spray is dry. Insecticides recommended for residual outdoor sprays include: malathion, diazinon, and permethrin and related pyrethroids. (Check labels of specific insecticide products for active ingredient listings.) It should be noted that diazinon registrations will be cancelled in 2003.

Insecticide Baits for Outdoor Use: Baits kill flies rapidly, but their effectiveness is short-lived unless treatments are repeated. Baits are best used to supplement a spray program and can be purchased in ready-to-use forms. Dry baits can be scattered around garbage cans or placed in garage windows or near other fly resting places.

Fly Control Inside the Home: Flies inside the home are best controlled with synergized pyrethrins or synthetic pyrethroids in aerosol or spray form. These materials give quick knockdown and kill of flies but have no lasting effect. They are most effective when applied into the air of closed rooms. Pyrethrins aerosols and sprays used as a spot treatment in open spaces kill few flies except those actually hit by the mist.

CONTROL OF CLUSTER FLY AND FACE FLY

The cluster fly and face fly are difficult to control in homes because they hibernate in walls and other inaccessible places. The following procedures, although the best available, may not insure complete elimination of these insects.

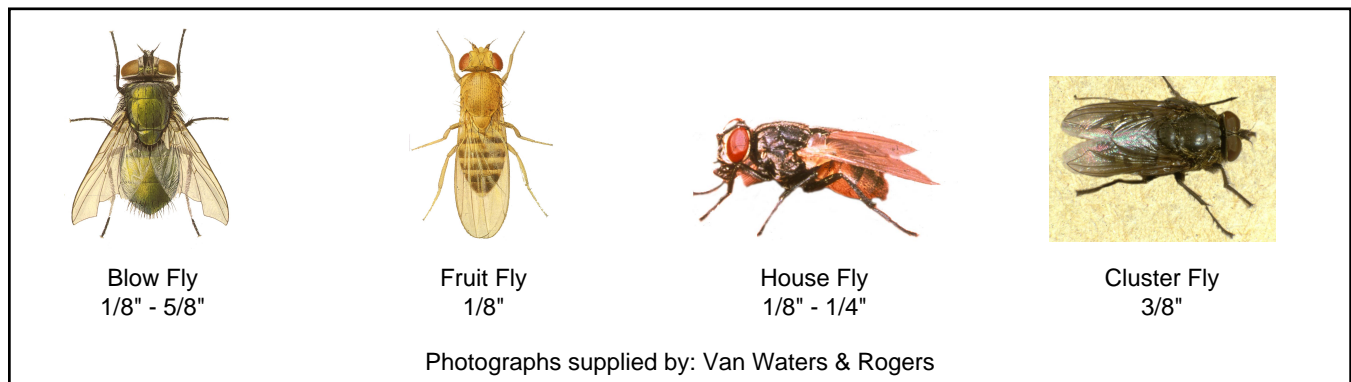
1. Seal cracks and other openings through which the flies can enter from the outside. (Such a practice has the added value of reducing heat loss in winter.)
2. Using a 2- or 3-gallon compressed air sprayer, apply a diazinon or malathion spray to thoroughly wet the surfaces in attics, basements, closets, store rooms, and other areas where the flies are frequently seen. Avoid getting spray on food or clothing.
3. To kill the flies that buzz around rooms, use an insect spray or aerosol that contains synergized pyrethrins or synthetic pyrethroids. For best results, the room should be closed and the material misfed into the air. Pyrethrins are "quick kill" insecticides and have little or no residual action.

4. Spraying the outside of the house, especially beneath the eaves, roof gables, and around the windows, has been shown to be a beneficial, preventive measure before the flies enter. The best time to treat the house is in August and early fall. Diazinon or malathion can be used with some success, but a second treatment usually is necessary. Permethrin (Ectiban) should be applied as an undiluted mist spray following label directions. In addition to thoroughly treating the outside of the structure, spray permethrin in attics and unoccupied lofts. Permethrin has a long residual action, and, if properly applied, only one treatment is necessary. Permethrin should be applied as an undiluted mist spray according to label directions. In addition to thoroughly treating the outside of the structure, spray permethrin in attics and unoccupied lofts.

SPECIES INFORMATION

- House fly — *Musca domestica* Linnaeus
- Little house fly — *Fannia canicularis* Linnaeus
- Blow flies — species of the family Calliphoridae
- Fruit flies - species of the family Drosophilidae
- Moth flies - species of the family Psychodidae
- Phorid flies - species of the family Phoridae
- Cluster fly - *Pollenia rudis* (Fabricus)
- Face fly - *Musca autumnalis* (DeGeer)

Be certain to carefully follow label directions on all of these applications.



READ AND FOLLOW ALL LABEL INSTRUCTIONS. THIS INCLUDES DIRECTIONS FOR USE, PRECAUTIONARY STATEMENTS (HAZARDS TO HUMANS, DOMESTIC ANIMALS, AND ENDANGERED SPECIES), ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS, RATES OF APPLICATION, NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS, REENTRY INTERVALS, HARVEST RESTRICTIONS, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL, AND ANY SPECIFIC WARNINGS AND/OR PRECAUTIONS FOR SAFE HANDLING OF THE PESTICIDE.

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