

## VECTOR CONTROL SECTION



Photo courtesy of J. Kalisch, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln

# DOMESTIC FLIES

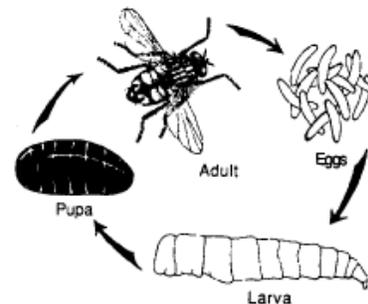
Only a few of the many fly species found in Hawai'i are of public health importance. These few are called "domestic flies" because of their close association with the food and waste material of people and their animals. An abundance of these flies within a community usually indicates a poor sanitation level of human and animal waste. Domestic flies should not be tolerated. They have the potential to transfer disease organisms to our food because they feed or walk on contaminated feces, dead animals, or garbage.

### *Common domestic flies in Hawai'i*

**Blow Fly and Bottle Fly.** These metallic green flies are the most abundant species in residential areas. They breed primarily in the decaying flesh and vegetable matter found in garbage cans.

**House Fly.** This gray fly with four black stripes on its back is not common in urban communities. It is found more frequently in rural areas near poultry and dairy farms where it breeds in manure.

**Dog Dung Fly.** This small gray fly with two black stripes on its back is the most pestiferous fly in Hawai'i. It is easily recognized outdoors by its persistent attempts to alight on people. It breeds on fresh dog and cat feces and fecal pats of dairy cows.



Courtesy of North Dakota State University

## CONTROL METHODS

### *Permanent Control*

#### 1. *Wrap or Bag Food Scraps.*

Place food scraps in plastic garbage bags and seal with ties to prevent flies from laying eggs. Tying garbage bags also keeps trash cans clean and free of odors that attract flies.

#### 2. *Eliminate Odors That Attract Flies.* Place garbage awaiting disposal in tightly lidded containers to minimize odors that attract flies to your home.

### LIFE CYCLE

Flies undergo an egg, larval, and pupal stage before transforming into adults. The cycle from egg to adult takes 8-12 days or more depending on prevailing temperatures. The mature larva or maggot usually leaves the breeding material to burrow into soil or debris to pupate.

3. *Remove Pet Feces Daily.* Removal prevents not only breeding of dog dung flies, but also odors that attract them. Bag or wrap pet feces for disposal with the garbage. Burying pet feces containing fly eggs and larvae will not kill them; they will develop underground and emerge as adult flies.
4. *Install Window and Door Screens.* Screening is the most effective method of keeping your home fly free.

### ***Temporary Control***

1. *Fly Swatters.* Killing the occasional fly that enters your kitchen with a swatter is safer and more economical than spraying insecticides.
2. *Flying Insect Aerosols.* Aerosol insecticides specifically labeled for flying insects are recommended for temporary relief from flies found outdoors. These aerosols work only when sprayed directly on flies.
3. *Insecticides, Concentrates.* Spraying a residual type insecticide to control fly breeding or adults is not recommended. Eliminating the source of fly breeding is a more permanent and better alternative.

*CAUTION: Certain pesticides and their solvents may cause respiratory irritation. Persons with respiratory diseases should consult their physicians before using any pesticide. IT IS A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW IF PESTICIDES ARE NOT APPLIED EXACTLY AS THE LABEL DIRECTS.*

For further information and details, contact these Department of Health offices:

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