

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

PEST OF THE MONTH PROGRAM NO. 39

IPM For Flies in Schools

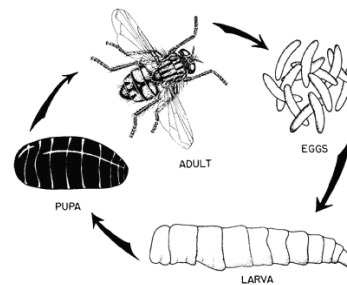
Many species of flies can be problems in schools. Flies such as house flies and blow flies which breed in food wastes (garbage) and/or animal feces are generally referred to as “filth flies”.

Filth flies develop through complete metamorphosis (egg, larvae, pupa, and adult). Adult female filth flies look for moist places with the right smell to lay their eggs. Food waste in dumpsters and garbage cans, animal feces, dead animals, grass clippings rotting in a pile these are all attractive to the adult female filth fly looking to lay her eggs. The larvae (maggots) hatch from the eggs and grow until they are ready to pupate (a type of cocoon) from which the adult flies emerge. In warm weather this complete metamorphosis can be completed in as little as six days.

Identification



House fly.



Life cycle of the fly.

House Fly (*Musca domestica*)

The common house fly is a dull gray fly, ¼-inch long with four dark stripes on the middle section (thorax) of its body. House flies typically lay eggs on animal feces and garbage. White, legless maggots (the larval stage) hatch from the eggs and grow to about ½ inch. When fully grown, maggots crawl away from their food source to undergo the pupal stage. They form a dark brown cocoon, known as a puparium, and later emerge as adult house flies that can fly one or two miles in search of suitable egg-laying sites.

Blow Flies (*Calliphoridae* spp.)

Blow flies are so-called because the larvae develop inside the bodies of dead animals, causing the carrion to have a bloated appearance. They also are attracted to garbage. Blow flies are about the size of house flies or slightly larger. They have been called “bottle flies” because their shiny blue and green color resemble colored glass bottles, though some species are shiny black or bronze. Large numbers of these flies indoors usually indicates the presence of a dead animal such as a mouse or bird inside the structure.

Management

The key to managing all filth flies is *sanitation*. Eliminating fly breeding sites, i.e., the material to which they are attracted to and on which they lay eggs, is usually sufficient to eliminate and prevent fly infestations. Conversely, without thorough sanitation, other control methods are largely ineffective. Therefore, trash should be kept in sealed containers (in trash bags and/or cans with tight-fitting lids). Dumpsters should be kept as clean as possible, emptied regularly and kept as far away from buildings as is practical. Manure and other decaying plant and animal material should be promptly removed. Also, eliminate areas of excessive moisture.

- Install and maintain screens to keep flies out of buildings, kill those that get inside with a fly swatter. Place a service request for severe or persistent infestations.
- Inform students, teachers, and staff of the importance of placing garbage inside the proper containers, garbage should not be left lying on the ground.
- Inspect dumpsters and other outdoor trash receptacles daily and remove any wastes lying on the ground.
- Wastes should be collected and moved off site at least once a week. Since flies breed faster in warm weather, garbage collection may have to be scheduled twice a week to reduce breeding sites.
- Make sure garbage can and dumpster lids seal tightly when closed and remain closed when not in use. Repair or replace garbage cans and dumpsters with holes or lids that do not close tightly.
- Regularly clean garbage cans and dumpsters to prevent the build-up of food waste an ideal place for flies to lay eggs.

Flies can detect odors over long distances. Smells of souring milk from hundreds of containers thrown in dumpsters can attract thousands of flies from the surrounding neighborhood. Placing garbage in sealed plastic bags and having cans and dumpsters cleaned and emptied frequently to eliminate odors is very important.

Contact Information

LAUSD Trouble Calls (213) 745-1600

LAUSD Office of Environmental Health & Safety (213) 241-3199

LAUSD OEHS Waste Management Hotline (213) 241-3955

LAUSD Pest Management Unit (213) 745-1435

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