



Pest Advice – Flies

Flies belong to the order *Diptera* that contains over 100,000 species worldwide. The name Diptera means two wings. Flies all follow a complete metamorphosis with distinct egg, larval (maggot), pupal and adult stages. The full life cycle can vary between 1 and 9 weeks, depending on the environmental conditions (temperature, moisture and food supply).

The adult fly mates, and then lays its eggs in a substance that will provide sufficient food for the immature stage, a pale, legless maggot. The breeding site is nearly always moist (damp soil, rotting vegetation and meat or animal faeces) and surrounds the soft-bodied maggots.

When maggots are full grown, they stop feeding and usually wander from the breeding site in search of a place to pupate. After pupation, they emerge as an adult fly.

In warm weather, flies complete their development in an incredibly short period, 7-14 days, and produce numerous generations during a typical season.

The flies most commonly encountered in the home are;

Common & Lesser houseflies - breed in rotting vegetable matter or animal faeces.

Eggs can hatch in 8 hours to 2 days.

Blowflies - (Bluebottle & Greenbottle) – breed in meat or meat products. Eggs usually hatch in 1 –2 days.

Fruit Flies - breed in rotting vegetable matter, fruit, sour milk, beer and vinegar. Eggs usually hatch in 24 hours.

Flies and Disease

Animal excrement and domestic waste form an ideal breeding ground for flies, which means they can spread diseases. Their bodies can pick up disease from food waste and excrement and carry this to food or surfaces that they subsequently land on. Diseases can also be carried in a fly's stomach, which can be transferred onto food from their saliva and faeces.

Control of Flies

The best method of fly control is to physically break the breeding cycle by making sure they cannot find anywhere to breed.

This can be achieved by;

1. Not leaving food uncovered on work surfaces.

2. Ensuring that kitchen bins are lidded to prevent flies accessing food waste.
3. Food waste should ideally be bagged prior to being put in the bin.
4. Regularly clean in and around kitchen and wheelie bins.
5. Ensure your wheelie bin lid is kept closed to prevent flies gaining access.
6. Animal waste should be cleaned up regularly and bagged prior to being put in a waste bin.
7. Drains and gullies, particularly in and around kitchens, should be cleaned regularly to remove organic material.
8. Not leave bowls of dog/cat food out all day, especially in the kitchen.

If flies are present in the house, these can be controlled with the use of flypapers and fly sprays available in most supermarkets and hardware stores. Care should be taken when using fly sprays, especially in kitchens and around vulnerable people, and the directions supplied with the product should always be followed.

Professional advice & treatment

Powys County Council does not undertake treatment for flies.

Commercial pest control companies are listed on internet, in the Yellow Pages and Thompson's Local Directory.