



## Fact Sheet on Vinegar Fly

### VINEGAR FLIES (also known as Barflies)

These small, flying insects are a nuisance in bars and restaurants, where they are attracted by yeast containing foods such as overripe fruit and vegetables, and particularly by liquids such as beer, wine and fruit juice.

Liquid residue in bottles, cans and cartons attracts them, but they lay their eggs in damp, soiled dishcloths, sponges and mops, the outside of wet beer lines in bars and in tiny pools of water on constantly damp floors, or inside rubbish bins.

The gelatinous biofilm (slime and scum) in drains, above the water level that is impervious to regular detergents, provides an ideal medium for their eggs and larvae.

During the warmer months it is common to see new flies emerging from dirty drains and from rubbish bins.

One female vinegar fly can produce over 500 eggs that will hatch in about 30 hours, and the new flies become sexually mature after about two days.

### Vinegar flies are the result of inadequate cleaning and housekeeping practices.

### ROUTINE CONTROL ACTIONS

The most important factor in the eradication of vinegar flies is the **elimination of their breeding grounds and food supply**.

Since vinegar flies can travel long distances, their breeding ground may be **outside** the premises, e.g. where fruit and vegetable supplies or rubbish bins are kept.

The following routine actions are recommended:

- Remove overripe fruit and vegetables from the area and seal or refrigerate them.
- After use, remove all empty wine, beer and juice bottles, or rinse them immediately. Recycling is commendable, but it must be managed properly.
- Remove drain covers and clean the drains regularly and thoroughly using a round brush and, ideally, an active enzyme cleaner. (Ask Exopest for details).
- Wash all cleaning cloths, sponges and mops, using warm water and detergent, and **dry** them, or at least leave them soaking in a fresh, sanitizing solution.
- Remove any beer, wine and juice from bar surfaces, floors and walls, using a mild detergent. Check below beer lines for sticky residues. Clean thoroughly and **dry**.
- Use clean, dry rubbish bins with liners and lids.
- Use a strong torch to inspect the floor under all equipment for rubbish and liquids.

**Exopest** can help you identify the source of the problem, and advise on effective solutions. In addition we may be able to:

- Install and service Electronic Fly Killers (EFK) with ultraviolet light tubes and glue boards, to attract and kill flying insects.
- Supply and service time-release insecticide dispensers to *reduce* the adult flies.
- Install flytraps with a pheromone attractant.
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- Spray some problem areas with an appropriate residual insecticide.

Please note that EFKs and other recommended equipment *reduce the adult fly population*, which in turn reduces the number of eggs laid. They are not, however, an alternative to proper daily cleaning and sanitation.

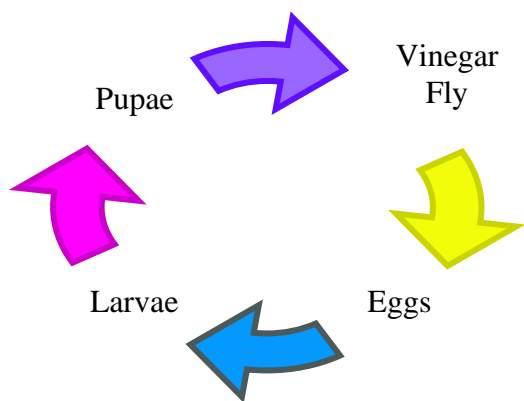
## SUMMARY

**Vinegar flies cannot be eradicated without the removal of all breeding sites and the implementation of an effective cleaning routine.**

Some areas, e.g. floors, may need to be sealed with silicone, cement or grout to prevent water pools and constantly damp patches. Good drainage is essential.

It is imperative that all staff members are aware of the problem, so they can make a concerted effort to improve the level of housekeeping and sanitation, to eliminate these insects.

### The Life Cycle of Vinegar Flies



Vinegar Fly: photo by:  
Simon Hinkley & Ken Walker  
Museum Victoria