



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TAKES STEPS TO ADDRESS KOHALA
AREA SEASONAL FLY OUTBREAK**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) Vector Control Branch and Hawai'i District Health Office, working with Hawai'i County officials, has begun a series of adult fly trapping programs within public areas in North Kohala on the Big Island to reduce the population of flies brought on by a seasonal outbreak. The department is using an environmentally safe, non-chemical strategy capable of removing thousands of flies daily.

The DOH is also asking for the public's help in reducing flies by removing pet and other animal feces, placing garbage awaiting disposal in tightly lidded containers, and using fly traps.

An assessment conducted with the County of Hawai'i Parks & Recreation indicate that a type of flesh fly (*Tricharaea occidua*) has become a nuisance in the area. Photos of the fly are attached.

Surveys of dairy, ranch, residential, and park areas have found that breeding of flies is occurring in these areas on exposed cow dung and cat feces. The DOH Vector Control branch has confirmed the identification of the fly species and interpreted collected data. Growth in fly populations follow seasonal patterns and increase significantly during the warm and humid days and nights of late summer.

"The late summer months, with warmer days, nights and other favorable environmental conditions, are a time in the Kohala area that is optimal for fly development," said Newton Inouye, acting district environmental program chief of the Hawai'i District Health Office. "The

(more)

population begins to increase and becomes more efficient in utilizing the food and reproductive resources available; the result is a population that begins to grow by leaps and bounds with each generation. Kama'aina residents know that seasonal fly problems are not something new to Kohala.

While the dog dung fly (*Musca sorbens*) has been a common nuisance species for years, fly populations found in 2007 and 2008 consist primarily of a type of flesh fly (*Tricharaea occidua*). Most flesh flies breed in carrion, dung, or decaying material, but a few species lay their eggs in the open wounds of mammals; hence their common name.

The Department of Health recognizes the nuisance and health risks the abundance of flies represent and is working to control them, as well as, further study ways that will reduce or eliminate outbreaks in the future. The public's cooperation in light of the magnitude and seasonal nature of flies in the Kohala area is greatly appreciated. Concerns, comments and suggestions from the public are always welcome and may be directed to the Vector Control Office in Honokaa at (808) 775-8860.

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HAWAII STATE
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

VECTOR CONTROL BRANCH

Kohala Area Seasonal Fly Outbreak



A flesh fly, *Trichareea occidua* (far left) and the dog dung fly, *Musca sorbens*, are the most prevalent species causing annoyance throughout the Kohala area.

The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has begun a series of adult fly trapping programs within public areas. This is an environmentally-safe, non-chemical strategy capable of removing thousands of flies daily.

The late summer months, with warmer days, nights and other favorable environmental conditions, are a time in the Kohala area that is optimal for fly development. Kama'aina residents know that seasonal fly problems are not something new to Kohala.

While the dog dung fly (*Musca sorbens*) has been a common nuisance species for years, fly populations found in 2007 and 2008 consist primarily of a type of flesh fly (*Trichareea occidua*). Surveys of dairy, ranch, range, residential, and park areas have found breeding is occurring on exposed dung and feces.

The DOH recognizes the nuisance and health risks the abundance of flies represent and is working to control them now as well as study ways that will reduce or eliminate outbreaks in the future. The public's cooperation in light of the magnitude and seasonal nature of flies in the Kohala area is greatly appreciated.

Concerns, comments and suggestions are always welcome. As many long time residents know the cooler shorter days of fall will naturally reduce the flies that man struggles in controlling.

Department of Health Vector Control Office in Honokaa phone: (808) 775-8860