



SOME TIPS FOR HEALTHY HOUSEHOLD WASTE MANAGEMENT

Rubbish, rubbish and more rubbish...would it not be wonderful if we could live without rubbish? No more flies, no more rats, no more smells and no more litter...but we have to face reality. We all produce waste – in fact on average, we produce one kilogram per person, per day.

The cost of disposal is set to increase by 400% in the next few years, as we will have to go further away to dispose of the waste.

While it is a core function of the City of Cape Town to remove domestic and industrial waste, it remains the responsibility of the household or business to manage their waste until it is collected by the City.

Don't feed the flies

Uncontrolled household waste poses all kinds of health risks and antisocial behaviour. These occur in various ways, but are almost always due to poor waste storage in the home. Most pest infestations and similar nuisances are directly attributed to food or organic waste being accessible to pests and people. Flies, rats, dogs, cats and vagrants are all attracted to food waste.



Many people experience an increase in the number of flies during the warmer summer months. This number tends to decrease as winter and colder weather approaches. Any organic matter or food waste (meat, fish and dog or cat faeces) is bound to aid the life cycle of the domestic fly, otherwise known as *Musca Domestica*.

A fly lays around 150 eggs in a single batch. The eggs are approx. 1 mm long and take 6-12 hours to hatch. Once the eggs have hatched, the larvae (maggots) will feed on microscopic organisms and liquids in decaying matter for 3-5 days. The eggs are a creamy white colour and about 10-15 mm in length. During the pupal stage (dark brown-6 mm long), the larvae become adults, this process takes 3-5 days. The adult fly can survive for many months, even during severe winters.

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Pupal Stage of the Larvae

There are other species of flies, namely "Blue Bottles, Green bottles or Blowflies". A single female fly of this species will lay up to 600 eggs from which larvae (maggots) hatch within 48 hours.

It is therefore essential that the life cycle of the fly be disturbed before it is completed. If it is possible to break the breeding cycle on your property by making sure that these abovementioned items are inaccessible to flies, it means that you will be doing your bit for a healthier neighbourhood. It goes without saying that all pet faeces in the garden should be collected and then well wrapped in a sealed plastic bag and effectively disposed of, on a daily basis.



Correct disposal of refuse

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The Environmental Health Section advises householders to adhere to the following rules.

Rules to manage your domestic refuse effectively.

1. Seal wet kitchen waste in plastic bags or newspaper parcels before disposing of in your refuse bin. This will prevent fly eggs from hatching.
2. Use a good quality (50 micron) black plastic bag for your household and your garden refuse. This avoids breakages in the bag and thus keeps the flies out and the smells in.
3. Store your refuse bins out of the direct sun, preferably in a dry and cool place.
4. Keep your refuse bin closed at all times with a proper tight fitting lid or knot your black bag to prevent flies from entering.



Correct washing of refuse bin

5. Should you notice maggots in your bin, use an insecticide (Doom, Baygon, Target etc) to kill them and then close the lid. When the bin has been emptied, wash it with a disinfectant such as Jeyes fluid and allow it to dry out.
6. Put your refuse out on the pavement only on the day of collection. Placing refuse out before collection day may result in a fine.
7. Keep your refuse bags out of reach of any animals. To deter animals, apply one drop of "citronella oil" in the bag before closing it.
8. Remove or seal any decaying filth of any kind (dog or cat faeces, disposable nappies, fish entrails, exposed compost heaps and rotting grass cuttings).
9. Wheeled bins should be closed completely and not have any additional waste outside the container. If you have excess waste, ask your neighbour if you can use their bin.

Please remember that flies do not stop breeding in the winter months, so the rules should be observed at all times of the year.

There are three ways to minimise waste for collection:

- a) Don't buy goods with excessive wrapping,
- b) Recycle glass, tins and paper, and
- c) Compost all organic waste, except meat and fish waste, and greasy foodstuffs.