

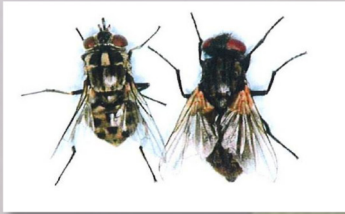
# Stable Fly Management in the Shire of Gingin FAQs

## What is Stable Fly?

**Stable Fly** (*Stomoxys calcitrans* L.) – also known as 'biting fly' - is very similar in size and appearance to the common house fly and bush fly, however the main difference is that a Stable Fly has, as its name suggests, a prominent biting mouthpart.

Stable Flies are persistent biters, feeding on animals several times a day, preferring to bite cattle and horses but will also attack humans, dogs, pigs, newborn lambs, pet kangaroos and emus.

The bite from this fly can be quite painful and therefore has the potential to cause considerable distress.



Above: Stable Fly (left) vs House Fly (right)



Above: life cycle of a Stable Fly

There are **five major elements** contributing to the success of stable fly breeding:

1. Rotting vegetable matter (vegetable production waste, hay, bedding and animal feed).
2. Mammalian blood (preference is cattle and horse, but human, dog, kangaroo, sheep blood is targeted).
3. Sandy free draining soils (ie, the Swan Coastal Plain).
4. Moisture (rainfall and overhead irrigation).
5. Warm temperatures (spring to autumn is ideal - Stable Flies are resilient to hot January days greater than 35°C).

Removing any one of these elements will limit the ability for Stable Flies to exist.

## What is the impact of Stable Flies on livestock?

Stable Fly can be a **serious pest of livestock** around animal enclosures, stables, feedlots and paddocks or pastures owing to its painful bite as it draws blood during feeding.

Animals will try to avoid the fly by stamping their feet, tail switching, throwing their heads down toward their front legs, and kicking sand up onto their legs and body. When Stable Flies are present in large numbers (more than 20-30 per animal), cattle will often bunch together in an effort to get to the centre of the group to avoid the fly.



This continual agitation can lead to **loss of weight and condition** from continual movement and allergic reactions on their skin from the bites. It can also reduce the animal's normal grazing time as they resort to feeding at night when the fly is not active. Bunching together by cattle is particularly hazardous in summer where animals can be at risk of heat stroke.

Stable fly numbers **can be monitored** by counting the flies on all four legs of about 10 animals. At more than 25 flies per animal, measurable reductions in weight gain and condition score occur and above 50 flies per animal may reduce weight gain by 25% and milk production by 40-60%.

## Who is responsible for managing Stable Fly in the Shire of Gingin?

The **Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food** (“DAFWA”) is the key agency responsible for the administration of the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (“BAM Act”) and the Stable Fly Management Plan (“SFMP”).

A recently agreed **Shared Responsibility with Shires** agreement includes DAFWA working with the Shire of Gingin to deliver the following actions:

- Monitor and react to public interactions through the Mobile App (My Pest Guide Report), PaDIS (1800 084881), and other electronic communications;
- Assist in the response to these interactions as appropriate;
- Keep a central database of those interactions;
- Provide training to Shire inspectors acting under the BAM Act;
- DAFWA has committed a full time inspector to work on-ground with and mentor all Shire inspectors as appropriate;
- Progress remedial actions in the serving of initial Letters of Advice and Pest Control Notices, and initiating prosecutions as necessary;
- Manage stakeholder relations in consultation with the Shires; and
- Manage education and communication with public and industry in association with Shires.

The Shire of Gingin will be responsible for on-ground response to reports, inspections, evidence gathering and warnings of non-compliance.

## What can I do to minimise Stable Fly breeding?

While there are registered pesticides that can be used to control both larvae (maggots) and adult flies, the main objective is to **remove breeding sites**. You can help by:

- Immediate burial of vegetable crop residues and reject produce.
- Not feeding waste vegetables to livestock unless in a trough or box to prevent mixing with soil.
- Preventing the build-up of hay residues or split grain feed.
- Keeping animal enclosures clean on a daily basis.
- Collecting manures, including soiled straw or litter bedding, from enclosures such as horse stables and poultry runs, both commercial and domestic.

In dealing with livestock feed and bedding waste:

- Keep waste in a fly-proof bin/container or in accordance with the appropriate codes of practice and *BAM Act 2007*, or
- COVER it completely with a tarpaulin or heavy duty plastic sheet to keep dry.

## Where can I find more information about Stable Flies?

### DAFWA:

Free Hotline: 1800 084 881

W: [www.agric.wa.gov.au](http://www.agric.wa.gov.au)

E: [stablefly@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:stablefly@agric.wa.gov.au)

Or visit: [www.stableflyactiongroup.org.au](http://www.stableflyactiongroup.org.au)

### Shire of Gingin:

T: 08 9575 2211

W: [www.gingin.wa.gov.au](http://www.gingin.wa.gov.au)

E: [mail@gingin.wa.gov.au](mailto:mail@gingin.wa.gov.au)

