

SPONSORED CONTENT

Inside

- Essential and Important
- How the Market is Growing
- Know Your Enemy
- Keep it Clean
- Tools and Techniques

2026 State of the *Small Fly* Control Market



SPONSORED BY



NISUS®

Better science for a better world.



About the Survey

The 2026 PCT State of the Small Fly Control Market survey was sponsored by Nisus and compiled by Readex Research, a privately held research firm in Stillwater, Minn. A sample of 5,360 pest control company owners, executives, technical directors and managers was systematically selected from the PCT database. Data was collected from 139 respondents — a 2% response rate — via online survey from March. 3-23, 2026. Respondents who did not offer small fly control services were eliminated from the results. The margin of error for percentages based on the remaining 129 respondents is plus or minus 8.6% at the 95% confidence level. Charts may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Essential *and* Important

Though it may never be the bread and butter of your business, small fly services are a critical part of most pest management programs.

Typically, this market includes fruit flies, drain flies and phorid flies. Residential customers often don't place the same emphasis on this service as they do others, unless small fly control is part of the overall service.

According to the 2026 PCT State of the Small Fly Market Report, sponsored by Nisus, 93% of respondents offer small fly control service, with 51% including it as part of their general pest control offering.

"Business owners and managers need to understand that controlling small flies is important to keep their customers comfortable," said Chris McNall, regional director of operations for Mosquito Squad Plus of the Mid-Atlantic. "Having a professional come out and look through areas to find those breeding sites will allow us to help them stay ahead of the issue."

Communication with residential and

commercial customers is critical to the growth and success of small fly programs. Educating customers makes them more ready for professional assistance, said Scott Hornemann, field training, quality and safety director, Adam's Pest Control, Medina, Minn. "The persistent issue of customer cooperation remains the most significant challenge for all pest control operators, and it will likely continue to be the biggest obstacle in eliminating and preventing these small flying pests," he said. "It is a shared burden; we simply need customers to help us help them."

Much of the fly small segment is focused on commercial accounts, with a 2-1 margin on those providing the service for restaurants and other corporate clients (64%) versus those seeking it for home or residential control (34%).

In New York City, fly control is essential in consumer-focused businesses, said Timothy Best, director of training, Suburban Pest Control, Yonkers, N.Y.

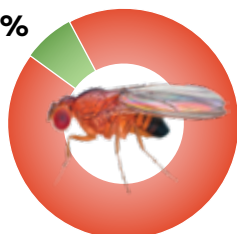
"Commercial food service is the obvious anchor, alongside other applications such as restaurants, bars, commissaries, food processing facilities," Best said. "In urban markets, such as New York City, I would also equally highlight health care, hospitality and high-end multi-unit residential dwellings." These account types, Best added, have zero tolerance for visible fly activity and have the budget to support a proper program.

Taking care of the problem before it becomes an infestation-level issue is important for both pest management professionals (PMPs) and customers, said Gerry Marsh, president and CEO of Wichita, Kan.-based Patton Termite and Pest Control. "Our small fly programs have been growing because I think we're doing better technician education about selling our customers about proactive preventative treatments. We're more aware of it and we've made a conscious decision to emphasize the education with our technicians," he said. ●

MOST OFFER SMALL FLY SERVICES

Does your service location offer services to control small flies (fruit flies, drain flies, phorid flies, etc.)?

No 7%

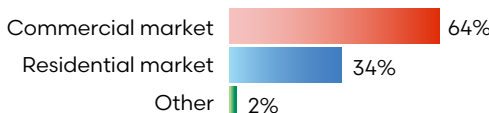


Yes 93%

Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 139

COMMERCIAL VS. RESIDENTIAL

Which market generated the highest revenue from small fly control for your service location in 2025?



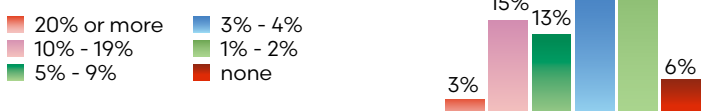
Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129



A GROWING OFFERING

Approximately what percentage of your service location's overall 2025 revenue was generated by small fly control services?

Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129





How the *Market* is Growing

Like other pest control services — including rodents, termites and mosquitoes — small fly management plays a critical role in winning new accounts and expanding existing customer relationships.

As the PCT survey showed, 31% of respondents said small fly control services had become a more significant part of their service location's business over the last five years, while 49% said there had been no change. Only 9% responded fly services accounted for a less significant portion of their service location's business.

WHERE'S THE GROWTH? According to Suburban Pest Control's Timothy Best, the growth potential is very clear.

"Growth continues to be strongest in commercial accounts where fly activity constitutes a compliance risk, not just a nuisance," Best said. "Drain cleaning as a service component, whether performed directly by the PMP or coordinated with a plumbing partner, is a meaningful differentiator.

"Offering it as a documented add-on service, priced separately and framed around department of health risk mitigation, creates a clear value proposition for decision-makers. Multi-location accounts such as restaurant groups and hotel chains represent recurring contract opportunities where a standardized small fly program can

be deployed across multiple properties."

Best's company serves New York City and surrounding boroughs, as well as Rockland and Westchester counties. The company has clients in a wide range of commercial sectors from food service to hospitality and more.

Chad Highley, owner of Environmental Pest Control, Marlow, Okla., said the small fly market offers recurring revenue opportunities.

"Fly control is a natural extension for pest control companies because it relies on the same core skills: inspection, species identification, understanding breeding sources and applying targeted treatments," Highley said. "It's not a 'new trade' — it's

just a more detail-driven version of what good technicians already do."

Highley added the segment continues to see steady growth, particularly in commercial markets, as stricter health regulations, online feedback and rising customer expectations encourage businesses to proactively address fly issues before complaints arise.

NUMBERS TELL THE STORY. According to the PCT survey, 40% of those who responded said the revenue generated from small fly control will grow in the year ahead. Sixty percent expect small fly revenue to remain the same with only 1% anticipating revenue to decline.

The busiest season for small fly control is summer, with 51% of respondents identifying it as their peak season. The survey states that spring is second at 17%, followed by fall at 8%.

Showing how geographic areas make a difference — i.e., locations that normally don't have a true winter season — 22% responded that the season doesn't matter when it relates to how busy fly control services are being requested.

According to Andy Nieves, vice president of BHB Pest Elimination, Wallington, N.J., small fly control represents a small share of revenues for a very specific reason.

"I believe it's because too many times, it is treated or bundled in with a general



PRICING CONSIDERATIONS

Compared with 2025, do you expect the price that your service location charges for small fly control service to increase, remain the same or decrease in 2026?

Increase	50% ↗
Remain the same	48% —
Decrease	2% ↘

Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 62

pest control service,” Nieves said. “I know I personally am guilty of selling a general pest control program that included flies in the past. It really needs to be a separate stand-alone service program.”

Nieves said that in many situations, he tailors a fly service program to a client’s specific needs. “Depending on the size of the property, a thorough commercial inspection for fly activity can easily take an hour or more,” he said.

Dale Shreve, general manager of Santa Barbara, Calif.-based Lenz Pest Control, agrees commercial accounts are the biggest opportunity.

“Most of the growth is coming from commercial accounts such as restaurants, schools, bars and food-handling facilities,” Shreve said. “These locations have more drains, more moisture, more trash and more opportunities for breeding sources.”

ADD-ON SERVICE. Because of the nature of the work, many pest management companies offer fly control as an add-on service. Shreve cited drain cleaning as part of the reason. “Drain cleaning is definitely part of it because many small fly problems start in drains, floor sinks, grease traps or areas with organic buildup,” Shreve said. “The more a company can offer drain



Fruit flies are a problem where moist, fermenting organic matter is present.

cleaning and sanitation support, the more valuable they become to the customer.”

McNall of Mosquito Squad Plus of the Mid-Atlantic agreed on the importance of encouraging customers to include drain cleaning as part of their fly control program.

“This is an add-on service. We attempt to get drain cleaning with every account. If they do not do a drain cleaning program we will offer it as a one-time service, if needed,” he said. “The biggest opportunity is to share knowledge of what can be done and show them that they can have their

fly issues resolved. Explaining how small flies live, the areas they will live and breed, and what we can do to assist them is key.”

PRICING. McNall and others cited pricing as a challenge. Small flies can take time as the inspection is crucial — and time is money. “Getting on the floor and looking in areas that the flies could be breeding takes time,” McNall said.

Small fly services can be time consuming depending on location and how difficult it can be to access the drains that need to be inspected and cleaned.

Of the survey respondents, 50% are planning to increase prices for small fly services in the next year. The increase is often based on the amount of time necessary to do the job properly.

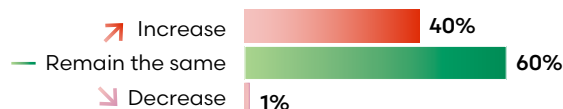
“Most fly problems are seen as a nuisance issue, unlike a rat running around a restaurant,” said Samuel Soto, owner of First Rate Pest Solutions, New Windsor, N.Y.

Soto said he charges a premium for fly service as it is often tedious work requiring quality time to properly solve the problem.

“The biggest challenges are correcting the conducive conditions and client cooperation. The biggest opportunity is developing IPM protocols that are effective and sustainable,” he said. ●

UPWARD MOMENTUM

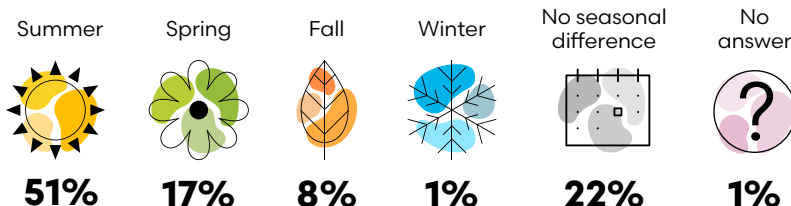
How do you expect revenue generated from your service location’s small fly control services to change in the next year?



Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129

SUMMER IS BUSIEST

At your service location, which season tends to be the busiest for small fly control service calls?

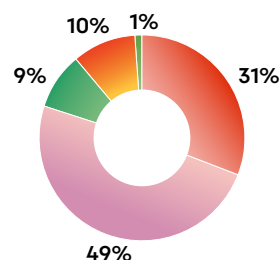


Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129

A DEPENDABLE SEGMENT

In the past five years, have small fly control services become a more or less significant portion of your service location’s business?

- More Significant
- No Change
- Less Significant
- Cannot Compare/Didn’t Offer 5 Years Ago
- No answer



Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129

THE BIG FIX

for small flies.



The dual active ingredients in **Nibor-D® Insecticide Foam + IGR** include borate-based Nibor-D insecticide plus pyriproxyfen, an insect growth regulator (IGR), for the overall control of listed pests.

The eco-benign formula of **Bac-Azap® Bio-Sanitation Liquid** is formulated to provide powerful odor elimination with a pleasant new scent. Bac-Azap has a special blend of seven microbe strains that consume organic materials that can cause odors.

CONTACT YOUR NISUS REPRESENTATIVE FOR MORE INFORMATION



Know Your Enemy

Small flies present a number of challenges to PMPs seeking control. Compared to more common flying insects PMPs encounter, such as house flies, small flies are particularly troublesome because they include a wide range of species with distinct identifying characteristics, breeding habits and behaviors.

The State of the Small Fly Market Report shows that fruit flies are by far the most troublesome, with 84% saying they are the most commonly problematic. For 73%, drain (moth) flies were an issue, followed by fungus gnats (55%) and phorid flies (50%).

Gil Bloom, associate certified entomologist (A.C.E.) and president of fourth-generation pest control firm, Standard Pest Management, Astoria, N.Y., said the biggest challenge is cleanliness.

“It is and always has been about combating client sanitation issues,” Bloom said. “Being able to identify breeding sites from soda guns to loose tiles, or on occasion fungus gnats from plants” is what’s so critical when it comes to identification.

Those surveyed said the small fly calls closely matched the PMP responses for the issues considered most troublesome. Customers first called for fruit flies (47%), drain/moth flies (29%), phorid flies (12%) and fungus gnats (10%).

During the last year, respondents stated that calls for small fly control jobs increased by 29% while only 5% said that the number of jobs decreased. The remainder answered that the number didn’t change from 2025.

HOW THEY BREED. “Fruit flies, phorid flies and drain flies are the top three most common in our area,” said Adam’s Pest Control’s Hornemann, who

broke down the top small fly species he encounters in accounts and how they breed:

- **Fruit flies** — Overripe fruit, trash, bar drains, anywhere sugary residue can be found.
- **Phorid flies** — Decaying organic matter, often in hard-to-find areas like under the concrete.
- **Drain flies** — Organic matter in drains, sump pits, any moist areas with organic matter in them.

Hornemann said small flies often aren’t considered significant pests by customers.

“This situation largely stems from a do-it-yourself culture and a lack of specific knowledge regarding the identification, biology and habits of the various small fly species encountered,” he said.

Hornemann said many people do not assign the same value to treating small flies as they would to, say, a German cockroach. “To some, a small fly infestation seems merely bothersome, whereas a cockroach infestation immediately suggests a health hazard. The reality, however, is that both pests can pose a significant health risk,” he said.

Still, small fly control presents PMPs with an opportunity. Nearly half (48%) said they have grown a small fly-only service call into a recurring pest control customer.

DEALING WITH TRASH. PMPs shared how they treat for small flies in trash compactors.

Suburban Pest Control’s Best said that he uses a step-by-step management process.

“A thorough inspection of the chute system starts at the compactor room. Inspecting the compactor unit itself for organic buildup around the intake, hopper and ram surfaces,” Best said.

Best inspects the compactor room floor drains for biofilm and moisture, then works upward. “I examine each chute intake door on every floor for organic residue, grease streaking, and live or dead fly activity,” he said. “On upper floors, fly pressure at the intake door is often the clearest indicator that the chute interior is the source. Note the condition of the chute door gaskets as deteriorated seals allow odor and fly



Darkwinged fungus gnat (*Bradysia* spp.)

egress into hallways. Document findings by floor and photograph evidence of buildup and fly activity for the building management report.”

This amount of diligence is necessary for levels of control in areas where sanitation is such a major issue (see sanitation article page 10).

In Oklahoma, knowing everything about the specific small fly you are investigating is everything when it comes to control, according to Environmental Pest Control’s Chad Highley.

“If you do not know from where they came and what they are, then you will never get ahead of them. They reproduce too quickly for that,” Highley said. “We see red-eyed and dark-eyed fruit flies most often. They are usually sourcing in, on and around the grease traps of commercial kitchens.”

Highley said his company recommends “finding the source and cleaning up the mess. It does not need to be any more difficult than that.”

Dealing with people is sometimes difficult in the process of identifying and controlling small flies, according to Mark Hayden, co-owner of Total Pest Control, headquartered in the greater Hartford, Conn., area.

“One of the biggest [issues] is communication with the customer and educating them. The collective steps that need to be taken care of like sanitation,” Hayden said. “Sometimes you’re dealing with a maintenance guy or manager, and they have so many things on their plate they don’t get it, and it trickles up.”

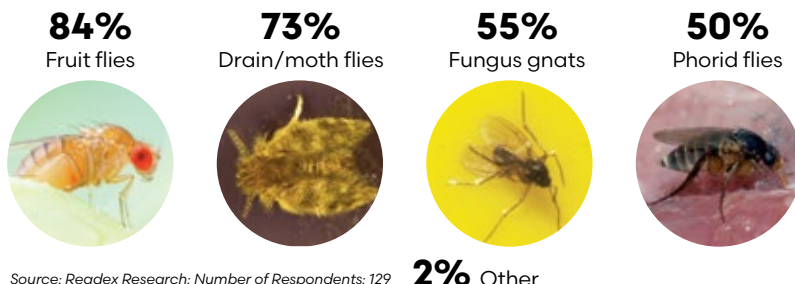
Being in front of the problem can change the way small fly issues start and how long they last, said Patton Termite & Pest Control’s Marsh.

“I think [services] should be more proactive. I don’t think a lot of them are. A lot of preventative measures can be done on a regular basis,” Marsh said.

One example Marsh shared was a restaurant or bar with beer taps that can attract small flies around the tap area. Flies bother the patrons, who then don’t want to go back. “Again, being proactive selling those preventative services to food handling establishments, there’s potential for growth in that market,” he said. ●

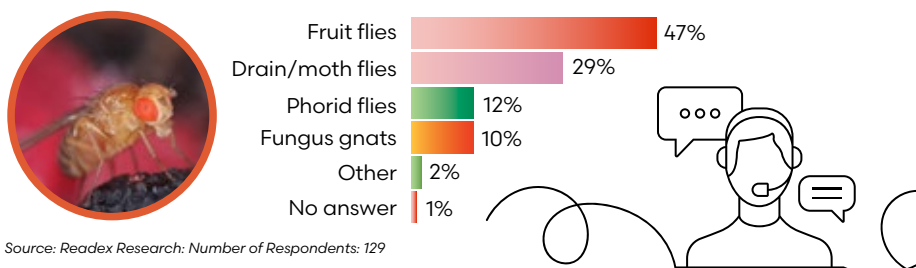
THE BIG FOUR

Which small fly species are commonly problematic in your market area?



FRUIT FLIES = PHONES RINGING

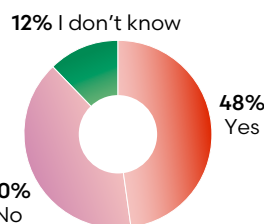
At your service location, which small fly species accounted for the largest percent of small fly service calls in the past year?



CONVERTING CUSTOMERS

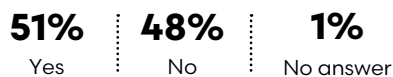
Has your service location ever grown a small fly-only call/customer into a recurring pest control customer?

Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129



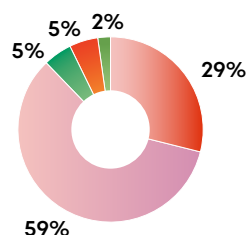
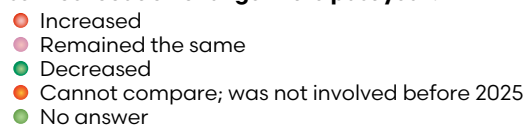
CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS

Are small flies included as part of your service location’s general pest control (GPC) service?



STEADY TO EXPANDING DEMAND

How did the number of small fly jobs at your service location change in the past year?



Keep it *Clean*

Sanitation is the key to many successful pest control strategies and small fly control is one of them. This is also one of the issues PMPs frequently attempt to educate consumers about, though often without success.

According to the survey, only 17% of respondents said their customers are taking an active approach with sanitation, while 58% said their customers “sometimes” focus on it. Almost a quarter (23%) said customers show a very low interest in sanitation improvement, which is how many of these infestations start in the first place.

Commercial kitchens are particularly challenging. In fact, 12% of PMPs said 50% or more of the kitchens they service have regular small fly issues requiring at least one service visit per quarter. And 34% said between 10% and 49% of their commercial kitchen customers regularly have small fly problems.

But customer education may be starting to pay off. In the survey, 42% of PMPs said customers are getting better at sanitation, while only 14% think their clients are getting worse.

Jennifer Glen, senior biologist at Vegatrix Pest Management in Elmsford, N.Y., said her treatment strategy centers on sanitation and education.

“Sanitation is essential not only for controlling small flies, but for effective pest management overall,” Glen said. “Maintaining cleanliness inside and outside homes and commercial properties is critical. It’s important to promptly remove debris, stagnant water and rotting food.”

Glen added that she’s found gentle but direct communication to be the most effective approach. This includes providing recommendations and practical tips during follow-up visits.

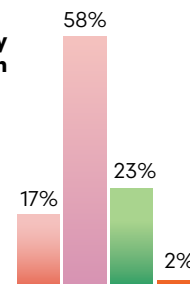
“Most customers take action based on my advice,” she said.

Environmental Pest Control’s Highley said, “Sanitation is the single most important factor in small fly control. Without it, treatments will fail — every time.”

CUSTOMER COOPERATION

In your opinion, what level of cooperation do you typically get from customers when it comes to improving sanitation to control and prevent small flies?

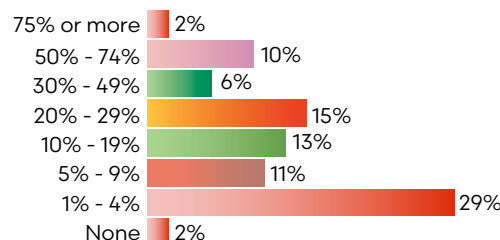
- High, they actively take steps to improve sanitation
- Medium, they sometimes take steps to improve sanitation
- Low, they expect us to solve their small fly problem without improving sanitation
- I don’t know



Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129

A COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATION

What percent of your service location’s commercial kitchen customers have regular problems with small flies (at least one service visit per quarter)?



Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 129



BETTER OR WORSE?

Would you say sanitation in your service location’s commercial kitchen accounts is getting better or worse?



Source: Readex Research: Number of Respondents: 113

Highley’s challenge is communication. Customers often underestimate how small amounts of buildup — drain scum, trash residue, grease accumulation and moist, decaying material — can sustain a small fly population.

The most effective communication strategies Highley utilizes involve showing evidence (e.g., photos or live inspection findings) and being specific. For example, saying, “This drain needs weekly cleaning” is far more effective than vague instructions like, “clean better,” she said.

Highley also ties sanitation directly to results by explaining, “If this isn’t corrected, the flies will return.” Pest management

professionals said the messaging needs to emphasize that the technician handles treatment and monitoring, while the customer is responsible for cleaning and maintenance.

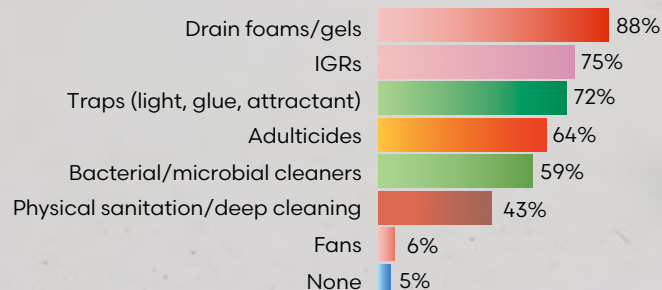
BHB’s Nieves said, “I’ve had accounts where a problem is completely taken care of, only to hand it off to a night cleaning crew that stopped cleaning the drains. Handing it off has to come with specific areas, drains, equipment to maintain.”

Total Pest Control’s Hayden said sanitation is 100% part of the solution. He said, “That will align the customer with the PMP with the recommendations and actions needed to solve the problem.” ●

Tools *and* Techniques

A FULL ARSENAL

Which of these products, tools or tactics does your service location use to treat for small flies?



Source: Readex Research. Number of Respondents: 129; Respondents could choose more than one answer.



The treatment process for small flies differs by species and can use multiple products and control tactics. According to the 2026 PCT State of Small Fly Control Market survey, 88% of those polled use drain foams or gels.

Another 75% use insect growth regulators (IGRs) while 72% employ various types of traps. Adulticides are used by 64% of those surveyed, followed by 59% who use bacterial or microbial cleaners, and 43% who focus on physical sanitation and deep cleaning.

Fans were the only other type of control method mentioned in the survey, with 6% saying they use them.

Lenz Pest Control's Shreve said his company promotes drain cleaning combined with bio-enzymatic drain products. "Drain foam and bio cleaners can do a very good job of breaking down the organic material

that small flies breed in," he said. "We also use fly lights in commercial accounts because they help monitor activity levels and reduce adult fly populations.

"The most important part is identifying the breeding source and making sure the sanitation side is handled. You can have the best product in the world, but if the customer does not clean up the source, the flies will keep coming back." He added that fly lights are valuable monitoring tools, while drain foams and bio cleaners are often more effective than spraying adult flies because they target the breeding source rather than just the visible infestation.

Suburban Pest Control's Best said the industry is increasingly shifting toward biological and enzymatic products that break down the organic biofilm where small flies breed, often in combination with insect growth regulators (IGRs) and

light or glue traps. Nieves of BHB said his company is also embracing the growing use of biocleaners across the industry. He uses bio-cleaners in lieu of soap or bleach in mopping water, which he said turns your mop into your "best friend."

McNall of Mosquito Squad Plus of the Mid-Atlantic said fly traps and baits remain essential tools for effective small fly control. He also relies on foam products because they allow technicians to treat areas even when the exact breeding site hasn't been identified. As the foam expands and dissipates, it leaves the active product behind in key harborage areas, providing more targeted control.

Highley of Environmental Pest Control said no single product is a silver bullet and that effective small fly management requires a well-rounded toolbox of solutions. ●

SMALL FLIES ARE A BIG PROBLEM.



As a ready-to-use foam, **Nibor-D® Insecticide Foam + IGR** can be applied quickly and easily to many of the problem areas where small flies and cockroaches live. It is designed for a fast, easy application that provides deep and even penetration to any void, drain, crack and crevice and is also suitable for non-food surfaces.

CONTACT YOUR NISUS REPRESENTATIVE FOR MORE INFORMATION

