

West Los Angeles VA Medical Center Controversy

The West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, which is no stranger to controversy, is the latest VA facility shown to have a serious problem with flies in its surgical suites. According to entomologists, phorid flies, such as those verified to be problematic in LA, are “attracted to open wounds . . . where they look to lay eggs. They can also transmit dirt, bacteria and other unsavory morsels, causing increased health risks to the already wounded.”

This is just the latest in a string of controversies for the 400-acre medical campus, which has also been criticized in recent years for failing to properly utilizing the property to combat homeless veterans issues and for wasting precious resources on questionable medical experiments on narcoleptic dogs.

Thus, when news recently broke that the facility had to cancel over 80 surgeries over a course of 22 days because it could not eradicate flies from its operating rooms, sadly, few were surprised. The issue surrounding flies and other unsanitary conditions at VA medical centers around the country adds a disturbing element to an already abysmal history of delayed care for veterans and further iterates the point that strong leadership is necessary to steer the Department away from disaster.

Last year, similar reports emerged from the Manchester VA medical center that an operating room had to be permanently closed because exterminators could not get rid of flies. And, just last week, photos emerged from the George E. Wahlen VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City showing an overflowing trash can, dirty sink, and haphazard countertops in a room where veteran Christopher Wilson was set to receive injections for a service-related injury.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/385985-fly-infestation-in-va-operating-rooms-another-example-of-chaos-within>