

# BE A SUPER “POOPER SCOOPER”

Whether walking in the neighborhood or in your own backyard, cleaning up after your dog is probably the least appealing aspect of being a pet owner. As unpleasant a task as being a “pooper scooper” is, un-scooped dog feces creates environmental and health hazards to you and your community.

## ENVIRONMENT HAZARD

- Dog feces is raw sewage. When allowed to remain on the soil, rain water will dilute and break apart the feces and slowly leach the fecal particles into local water sources. It can contaminate the local water table, nearby ponds, rivers and drinking water reservoirs.
- Pet waste left on sidewalks or streets are carried by rain water into the storm sewers where they can also contaminate local water sources. Don't drop bagged or un-bagged pet waste down a street drain grate or hose the pet waste towards a storm drain. These drains are part of the storm water drainage system and the water will not be treated at a sewage treatment plant.
- Keep pet waste out of household compost piles. While other animal feces (for example, sterilized cow manure) can be used as fertilizer, parasites carried in dog feces can cause disease in humans and should not be incorporated into compost piles. The manure in commercial lawn and garden fertilizers is different because it has been carefully composted and sterilized to be a safe, useable product.

## HEALTH HAZARD

- Raw dog feces can carry many disease pathogens including bacteria such as E.coli, campylobacter, streptococcus, salmonella; parvovirus and coronavirus; parasites such as roundworm, tapeworm, pinworm, hookworm and threadworm.
- Exposure to these organisms can cause illness in both pets and humans (especially children) who come in contact with or accidentally ingest even small amounts of fecal material.



The most effective way for pet owners to keep the environment, people and other pets safe and healthy is ***to clean up and dispose of pet waste***. Since dogs can't clean up after themselves, this becomes a people-issue rather than a dog-issue.

## **SCOOP THE POOP, BAG IT AND PUT IT IN THE TRASH.**

- Wear plastic gloves to protect your hands. Carry hand sanitizer with you, and wash your hands when you're finished.
- Make it a habit to keep a few plastic bags tied to your dog's leash whenever you go out. You can purchase special disposal bags or you can re-use newspaper delivery or plastic grocery bags. Make sure your bag is big enough for the job and doesn't have any holes. You can purchase a plastic "pooper scooper" with a long handle if you don't want to use a bag.
- Using the bag like a glove, pick up the pet waste, turn the bag inside out around the waste and seal or knot the bag.
- Put pet waste in the trash. Landfills are designed to safely handle substances like dog waste, used cat litter and dirty diapers.
- If your dog poops on your property, try to clean-up your yard every day or two to avoid an accumulation of feces. For large yard cleanups, use several smaller bags rather than one large trash bag to avoid leakage.
- If you are too busy to clean up after your dog on your property, there are many private services available that can do the clean-up for you.
- Being a "pooper scooper" is part of having a dog. It may sound silly at first, but be proud to be seen cleaning up your dog's poop! Cleaning up shows pride in your community, in yourself and in your dog.



## **WEST WINDSOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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