



WaterSMART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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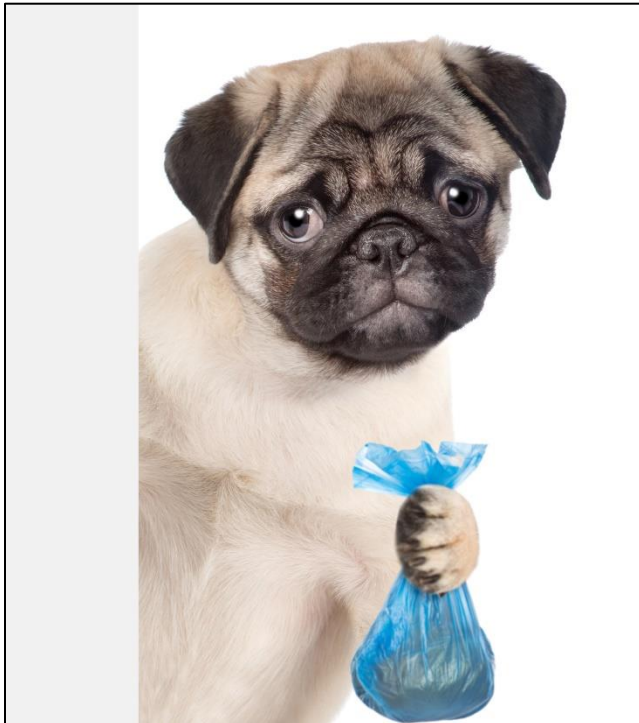


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The Problem of Dog Waste on the South Shore

On the South Shore alone, we have more than 16,000 registered dogs from Weymouth to Kingston. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average dog produces approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ pound of waste per day. If you do the math, that's **more than 12,000 pounds of poop per day** and 4.5 million pounds of poop per year – just on the South Shore!

Leaving behind pet waste is unhealthy for people, other dogs and the environment. It is a breeding ground for infection. Pet waste is raw sewage and has twice as much bacteria as human waste. A 40 pound dog produces 7.8 billion fecal coliform bacteria per day. When pet waste is left on the side of the road or in the woods, the bacteria is released into the environment and can end up in our water supply where humans and other animals can be exposed. Children are particularly vulnerable to these bacteria, since they often play in the dirt and put things in their mouths. These bacteria can produce symptoms that are flu-like, including vomiting, fever, rashes, and diarrhea. But it's not only children that can be affected by being exposed to dog waste. Giardia, Salmonella, and Campylobacter are just some of the diseases that can be transferred to

humans from pet waste. The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has also confirmed that pet waste can spread parasites including salmonella, tapeworms, roundworms and hookworms.

One of the largest pet waste issues is improper disposal. A common misconception is that it is a natural fertilizer and can simply be collected into the garden or flower bed. This is not true. In fact, leaving pet waste on the ground or concentrating it in one specific area of the yard can seriously harm soil quality and can be dangerous for both families and their pets. Cows and horses are herbivores, which makes their waste ideal for use as fertilizer, but dogs are carnivores, making their waste unsuitable for soil enrichment. But that's not all. In developed areas, waste deposits left on the ground can also serve as a steady, abundant food source for rats and mice.

South Shore Public Works departments often discover dumped dog-waste bags when they clean out our storm sewers. This is a huge problem because storm sewers are not connected to wastewater treatment plants or septic systems like the drains in your home. When pet waste is tossed into a storm drain or left on the sidewalk, street or yard, it is carried by rainwater through the storm sewer system directly into our local streams and rivers without any treatment. This means that the dog poop that washes into our storm sewers flows directly to nearby creeks, fish and wildlife habitats, downstream recreational areas, and into our drinking water supplies.

Scooping poop is not just about the mess – it's about clean water and our health. So help us spread the word, the message is clear: Scoop the Poop! whenever and wherever... even in your own yard, in the woods or at the beach, even in the snow and even if you have a small dog. Always bring bags and put filled bags in a trash can. Never put dog waste in a recycling bin or a storm drain. Help us keep dog waste out of our waters. You can make a difference by being a responsible pet owner.

To help educate the public and combat this problem, the North and South Rivers Watershed Association, in partnership with 11 towns on the South Shore: Aquarion (Hingham and Hull), Duxbury, Hanover, Hingham, Kingston, Marshfield, Norwell, Pembroke, Rockland, Scituate and Weymouth, distributes pet waste education cards to town clerk offices (where people get their dog licenses), pet stores and veterinary clinics. The Scoop the Poop! Card is a part of the WaterSmart program, and was created by the Greenscapes Coalition. The card educates residents on the importance of picking up after their pets.

About WaterSmart – The NSRWA, in partnership with 10 towns on the South Shore; Aquarion (Hingham and Hull), Duxbury, Hanover, Kingston, Marshfield, Norwell, Pembroke, Scituate, Weymouth, provides education to school children and adults on water conservation in your home, business and town.

For more information visit watersmartsouthshore.org or nsrwa.org.
To request Scoop the Poop cards contact Lori at lori@nsrwa.org

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Did you know?

- There are **16,000** registered dogs on the South Shore
- Each dog contributes on average **3/4 pound** of poop daily



That equals 12,000 pounds of poop PER DAY!
Help us protect our health, our pets and our drinking water

SCOOP THE POOP!

Be WaterSMART watersmartsouthshore.org nsrwa.org

Scoop it!

Scoop the Poop - Whenever and Wherever

- even in your own yard
- even in the woods, remote locations, areas in the snow
- even if you have a small dog

Always bring bags
to prevent the dog from digging

- Always put filled bags in trash cans - never in recycling bins!

Don't bury pooping dogs

- Never put dog waste into a storm drain!

Don't strain flow directly into our local waters - they are not connected to the sanitary sewer.

- Never leave bags of poop by the side of the road, in bushes, or lying around.

Scooping Poop is not just about the mess - it's about clean water and our health!

Be WaterSMART
WaterSmart.org
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