

RIVERDALE PARK

Pet Waste Education Program



The Town of Riverdale Park's (TRP) pet waste education program aims to promote responsible pet ownership through increasing public awareness of how pet waste impacts water quality and the health of the community. The Riverdale Park Sustainability Committee (RPSC) began the pet waste education program in 2014 with a focus on educating residents about how removing pet waste from public and private property benefits the community health and protects our natural resources.

Chapter 10, Sections 10-9 and 10-10 of the Town Ordinance prohibits people from leaving their pet's waste on public property or, without the consent of the owner, on private property and provides for penalties for infractions. Pet owners caught in violation can be fined by the Town \$50 for their first violation. Subsequent violations are set at \$100, and then \$250. This Ordinance helps to protect the tributaries of the Anacostia River that run through TRP.

The pet waste education program has provided information periodically in the town's monthly publication, The Town Crier, distributed educational flyers, and provided information and pet waste bags at local events. Prince George's County outreach materials for "[Scoop that Poop](#)" (below) are available at public events and at Town Hall. It has further been suggested that the public health and safety concerns around pet waste be integrated into the public school system, and to include the updated flyer as part of that outreach to educate our youth. Most recently at the June 2019 event to kick off the Town's Centennial Celebration, the RPSC hosted an informational table with activities around the importance of picking up pet waste.

In March 2020, Sustainable Maryland selected the Town to participate in Prince George's County's Pet Waste Management Initiative by providing the Town with outreach marketing campaign materials and pet waste stations. This program offers up to six pet waste stations at no cost to the participating municipality. Participating locations receive customized marketing materials with their town's logo, and a starter kit of bags. In exchange, the town will install the stations, replenish their supply of bags, and track and report usage of bags and waste volume.

A robust and collegiate core of users of the local dog park, [Waggertail Dog Park](#), continue to model responsible behavior, and to educate and encourage all who visit. The Waggertail Dog Park Facebook social media page, <https://www.facebook.com/waggertail/> has added new members and reinvigorated its activities. This platform will be used to continually educate park users and to garner more support around pet waste issues. The Park has active volunteers who routinely clean up waste left by others, and plan to work with the TRP to increase educational signage around the Park, while adding pet waste bag stations in the other needed areas.

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On June 15, 2019, the Town of Riverdale Park hosted an outdoor, kick-off event to start the year-long celebration of its 100th anniversary since incorporation (June 1920). The Sustainability Committee set up in the area adjacent to the Riverdale Town Center MARC station and manned two sustainability-themed, outreach tables; about pollinators and the importance of properly disposing of dog waste. Approximately 250 people attended the event.

Scoop Your Dog's Poop

Across from the pollinators display, another Sustainability Committee member, Lora Katz, and her four-legged friends, Annie and Sophie, promoted the [Prince George's County Pet Waste Management Campaign, Scoop the Poop](#). An estimated 1.3 million dogs live, play and poop in Maryland. Picking up after your dog's waste is important for your health, the health of your pet and Maryland's environment. The simple act of picking up after your dog by "scooping the poop" can assist in removing harmful nutrients and bacteria from local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, keep our citizens healthy and our yards and shoes clean. With bilingual posters and brochures, visitors engaged in conversation about pet waste issues in the Town as well as taking aim at the "Poop Bucket Challenge". The challenge was to throw the "poop" beanbag in the correct answer-bucket to the question, "What's the best thing to do with pet waste?". Note the labels on the buckets; putting poop in the trash for the landfill or flushing it are the best waste disposal methods. Don't compost it or bury it.



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Why SCOOP That POOP?



just 1 dog



THE EPA SAYS:
dog poop is as toxic
to the environment as a
chemical or oil spill

DISEASE and BACTERIA from
your dog's  pollutes local
streams and beaches, which can
make fishing and swimming
UNSAFE.

PLEDGE TO
#SCOOPTHATPOOPPGC
@ENVIRONMENTMYPGCUS

scoop IT.

bag IT.

trash IT.



For more information call 311 or go to environment.mypgc.us