

Top Ten Reasons to Pick Up After Your Dog

Every responsible dog owner agrees... picking up after your dog is a MUST. No matter where or when it occurs there is NO excuse for not scooping the poop. So here are 10 reasons why EVERY dog owner MUST be responsible for picking up EVERY TIME.

1. **It's the law.** Just like littering, it's unlawful NOT to pick up after your dog, and your violation is subject to fine. Eagan City Ordinance provides for fines for people who do not pick up after their dogs.
2. **It's common courtesy.** Cleaning up after your dogs shows respect for our neighbors and our community. Only irresponsible dog owners leave their dog's poop for others to look at, step in or clean up.
3. **Dog Poop is unhealthy.** Abandoned dog poop can host diseases and/or parasites which can infect other dogs who come into contact with it, or be transmitted to people who accidentally step in it and track it home. Particularly at risk, of course, are children who play on the ground. Disposing of dog poop immediately helps all dogs stay healthier and reduces feces-borne parasites and illnesses.

If your dog has diarrhea, and you cannot clean it up, you should not allow your dog to defecate in places where other dogs or children may come in contact with it. If your dog has prolonged diarrhea (more than two days), you should take her to the vet.

4. **Dog Poop bio-degrades slowly.** Some people think it's okay to leave dog poop because it will break down naturally. However, the process is very slow, and, especially in places where the dog population is high, abandoned dog poop can accumulate faster than it breaks down. In the cold weather, poop freezes and, because poop that is frozen to the ground is almost impossible to clean up, it will remain where you left it for several weeks to several months.
5. **It's not fertilizer!** In fact, poop impedes landscaping efforts. Leaving dog poop encourages other dogs to mark that spot (by urinating over the previous dog's scent): poop left on the grass contributes to the problem of "nitrogen burn."
6. **Dog Poop pollutes the water.** The Eagan area affects both the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. Dog feces, like any feces, contain high levels of nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus, which actually pollute the water.

Dog feces and urine contain relatively large amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus. These nutrients feed and stimulate the growth of algae in water bodies in much the same way as fertilizers help lawns to grow. This can cause the water body to become depleted in oxygen, making it less healthy for fish and large levels of growth can impede recreational and aesthetic value of water as well. ("[The Scoop on Poop](#)," Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program)

Cleaning up after your dog is environmentally responsible. And please don't dispose of dog poop in storm drains: storm drains are a direct conduit to our rivers!

7. **Dog Poop is unsightly.** Everybody knows that. It's disgusting. Pick it up. We all deserve to live in a clean city where we can be proud and step lightly.
8. **Dog Poop tops the list of complaints against dogs.** Along with dog aggression, nuisance barking or unsupervised dogs, most complaints against dogs are about people not cleaning up after their dogs. This is true for city parks, sidewalks, and your own lawns.
9. **Dog Poop makes dog owners look bad.** For everyone who cares about their pets, the worst thing about dog poop is that it is bad for public relations. Dog Poop is a big reason for negative public sentiment against dogs. Every time you don't pick up after your dog, you are giving one more reason for others to dislike dogs and dog owners.
10. **Your actions set an example for others.** When you pick up after your dog, you are part of the solution! And your actions will help convey the message that it's the right thing to do. Many people even carry extra bags to offer to others as a subtle and neighborly hint that cleaning up after our dogs is what responsible dog owners do.

More and more people are taking it upon themselves to pick up "orphan poop." These people are truly ambassadors. You can set a good example, too. If you see orphan poop, pick it up with one of those extra bags you are carrying. Your actions will encourage others to do the same!

It's up to each of us to do our part in keeping Eagan clean and poop-free. Make sure you carry bags with you. In fact, carry extras and offer them to dog owners who aren't prepared or may not yet be educated about the importance of picking up after their dogs. Spread the word that **Poop Destroys Our Good Reputation as Responsible Dog Owners!**