Newsletter & Social Media Example Content

Topic: Pet Waste Disposal

Newsletter Content:

Being a pet owner brings a lot of joy to life, but not so much when it comes to cleaning up after your pet. However, this is a key job for a responsible and courteous pet owner. It protects our community and the environment from risks associated with pet waste.

Not disposing of pet waste, or doing so incorrectly, poses a threat to other animals and humans. From the curious animal passing by to the unbeknownst gardener, exposure to pet waste can happen in a variety of ways. Both bacterial infections and parasitic infestations can be caught through exposure. The severity of these issues varies depending on the infection or infestation.

Improper disposal of pet waste can also pollute the environment and contaminate water sources. When it rains, runoff can carry items left on the ground into nearby waterways. If pet waste is not picked up and is carried into a storm drain it will also empty into local streams and other waterways. The pet waste then introduces bacteria to the waterway, posing a health risk to those using the water for recreation. It can also promote the growth of algae and weeds leading to a harmful imbalance that can cause the natural environment and fish populations to suffer.

There are two main methods to properly dispose of pet waste:

* Always use a disposable bag (preferably biodegradable) to pick up pet waste and put it in the trash when out on a walk, at the dog park, or in your own yard.
* If you are in your own yard, you can also bury it 6 inches underground.

Cleaning up after your pet is not a glamorous job, but the seconds it takes to do so prevents harm to people, animals, and our community’s waterways.

 [Insert any additional information specific to your community such as local ordinances or fines for not picking up pet waste, parks or other locations with pet waste stations, etc. This information can also be added to the example social media post language below.]

Social Media Content:

* Pet waste is more than an unsightly nuisance — it is a source of bacteria in our waterways and a risk to public health. Some of the most common bacteria / parasites that are introduced due to pet waste are: Salmonellosis, Toxocariasis, and Toxoplasmosis
* Pet waste pollutes! Don't let pet waste go down storm drains! When it rains, runoff can carry all kinds of pollution, including pet waste, into storm drains that lead to our waterways. When taking your pet for a walk, pet owners should always pick up after their pet. It is also encouraged to pick up pet waste on your property, so it isn’t still there when the next rainstorm arrives.
* Pro Tip: carry extra bags with you when you walk your dog so you always have one handy and can encourage others to also pick up after their pooch. You can even have your dog do the carrying by attaching a pet waste bag dispenser to their leash and tying or clipping the used bag to the leash or harness until you come across a trash can.
* Scooping your pet’s poop is a simple two-step process: 1) use a pet waste bag or other plastic bag to pick up after your pet, and 2) put the used bag in the next available trash can. It’s simple, but it keeps unsightly messes off of our sidewalks, roads, and neighbor's yards, and keeps bacteria in the pet waste from reaching our waterways.
* Did you know that with an estimated 900,000 dogs in Houston-Galveston area, our pets could collectively be depositing 52 dump trucks-worth of pet waste each day? You may not think it is a problem not to pick up after your pooch, but the bacteria pet waste introduces to our waterways is a problem that really adds up!

Other Helpful Links & Resources:

* Houston-Galveston Area Council’s Pet Waste Pollutes webpage: <https://www.h-gac.com/pet-waste-pollutes>

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