



# PooPrints™

The Solution for Community Management and Owners!

Pet waste is a heated topic for apartment owners, managers and their residents. With up to 40% of pet waste left un-scooped, the problem ranks at #6 on America's Top Grievances list, according to a January 2010 Consumer Reports survey. The greater impact, however, occurs when the droppings wash into lakes, rivers, and streams, bringing a host of bacteria with them.

BioPet Vet Lab, a biotechnology company specializing in canine genetic testing, has rolled out a national program designed to address this hazardous issue that plagues many communities. BioPet developed PooPrints™, a pet waste identification program built on a solid scientific foundation, to provide management with a means to enforce pooper scooper rules in multifamily communities.

PooPrints™ works by creating a community database the DNA of each dog on the property. DNA is collected via a non-invasive, painless cheek swab of the pet. If pet waste is left behind, a small sample can be collected and matched back to the correct dog and its owner. While most pet owners are doing the right thing by picking up waste, this program deters the few pet owners who do not. Other benefits of the online registry include lost-and-found services with positive proof of identification, online storage of veterinary records and vaccine history, and discounts on pet supplies.

In addition, BioPet has partnered with non-profit, green organizations to promote awareness and educate the public as to the negative environmental impact of pet waste. Over the past 30 years, the canine population in the United States has doubled, reaching over 78 million pet dogs. Annually, 21 billion pounds of waste is generated. Just one pile of dog waste contains over 3 billion fecal coliform bacteria, including *E.coli* and *Salmonella*.

Coliform bacteria are common in the environment – from surface water to soil to vegetation - and most are not likely to cause disease. However, fecal coliform bacteria, a subgroup of total coliform, are found in the intestines and feces of warm-blooded animals and humans and may be pathogenic. These bacteria constitute a non-point source pollutant which enters the water supply through several means, including storm water run-off. Fecal coliform presence in drinking water is a public health concern because of the potential for disease-causing strains of bacteria, viruses, and protozoa. Waterborne disease from these microbes often results in flu-like symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, fever, and diarrhea. In rare instances the fecal coliform *E. coli* has caused severe illness and death.

It is true that wild animals and livestock also contribute to fecal coliforms found in drinking water. However, these animals possess a fraction of the number and variety of intestinal bacteria when compared to dogs. Studies conducted throughout the US have shown that 20% of fecal coliform bacteria found in contaminated water can be traced back to dogs. Bacteria, nitrates, and phosphorus washed into water from feces provide ample nutrients for algae and phytoplankton "blooms" – a

process called eutrophication. The growing plant biomass depletes the water of oxygen, a condition known as hypoxia, which causes large fish kills and harms other wildlife.

In 1991, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) named pet waste as a non-point source pollutant, the same category as oil and toxic chemicals. The EPA placed pet waste management at the top of their guidelines for *Pollution Prevention: Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations*. They estimate that a 20 mile watershed can be closed from just 2 to 3 days worth of droppings from a 100-dog community. In addition, pet waste has been implicated in the closings of several swimming, fishing, and recreational areas in lakes and rivers.

Other pathogens from pet waste (including roundworms and their eggs) can survive in the soil for several years. These pathogens pose a health hazard as they transfer to other pets who walk by, and just as shocking, transfer to humans. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), waste is one vehicle from which zoonotic diseases pass from pets to humans. While children are the most susceptible, anyone who is gardening, playing sports, or walking barefoot may be at risk of coming into contact with contaminated soil, parasite eggs, and other pathogens.

BioPet views PooPrints™ as the responsible answer to solving these environmental and health problems. The program is a tool for management to promote picking up waste so none is left behind to contaminate the environment. Scooping is a part of being a responsible pet owner, and should not fall on the shoulders of property management or maintenance.

Already in use in hundreds of communities in 33 states, PooPrints™ has been the ultimate solution for many managers around the country. Debbie Logan of Twin Ponds in Nashua, NH, says that “The program is just fantastic for us. It was easy to implement and everybody wins. We are spending less time looking for violators, and residents have a clean, healthy community.” But as is the case with many new technologies, not everyone is an immediate fan. “I’ve had some people say it’s completely over the top and ridiculous,” says Deb Violette of Timberwood Commons in Lebanon, NH. “I’m sure I’ll have a few people who won’t come in, and I’m sure those are the people we’ll have to chase and those are the people who are doing it.”

Steve Frans, board member for a condominium association in Baltimore, has a different take on the situation. Pet waste has been found in the elevators, hallways, and common areas of his condominium building. "To me, it's incomprehensible that anyone who is a responsible pet owner would actually walk away from pet messes." Frans, who is legally blind and is assisted by his guide dog Gerri, says "My dog has never, ever, ever messed in the hall. Other people suspect me, I know. They say, 'He's blind, he can't see, obviously his dog is messing.' But he's not, and the DNA would prove it. To me, this would almost be like vindication."

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**About BioPet Vet Lab:** BioPet Vet Lab is a biotechnology company specializing in animal genomics. located in Knoxville, Tennessee. BioPet’s research and development group explores genetic science in order to offer new tests that can be used to improve the healthcare and quality of life for our beloved pets. For additional information about BioPet Vet Lab and the PooPrints™ program, visit their website at [www.biopetvetlab.com](http://www.biopetvetlab.com), or [www.pooprints.com](http://www.pooprints.com)

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