

# ADVOCACY



## ADVOCACY FOR ECO-PET WASTE DISPOSAL/ REPURPOSING

Grassroots can be effective, and an easy way to make a start.

The Enviro Pet Waste Network website has been established to provide resources and information to support pet waste advocacy efforts from individuals and community groups. Even businesses and government staff from time to time need to see what others are up to in order to help them advocate internally for projects.

Often noise made about a topic from different individuals and groups helps decision-makers see how important the issue is to the community. This can make it easier for decision-makers to allocate funds to make something new or different happen. Use the power of numbers from everyday people.

Look for like-minded associates who will see the effort as a win-win – for their goals and values. Invite eco-savvy pet lovers to join a pack that will take a bite out of landfill waste.

### Advocacy to your local council or municipality

Here are some key questions to gauge their interest in pet waste issues. For example:

- Do you know how many dogs there are in your region?
- Do you know how many kilograms of dog poo is generated each day?
- Where does all the pet waste in your region go?
- Are you aware that bagged pet waste in landfills produces methane?
- What messages do you provide pet owners about pet waste disposal practices that are eco-friendly? For example, provide pet owners with information about how to [compost pet waste at home](#)?
- Do you offer homeowners any incentives to help divert pet waste from landfill? For example, discounted home pet waste compost bins.

### Here is a list of what advocacy action might include:

- Gathering facts and data – learn about the extent of pet waste issues in your town or region. For example, multiply the number of dogs by 0.34g or 12 ounces to determine the amount of dog poop generated each day.



- Learning who the key players are in your town or region when it comes to pet waste. For example, local dog groups, animal shelters, council or municipality environment staff, waste services personnel and see if you can find any interest in your cause.
- Reviewing your local council or municipality's website for information/ initiatives. For example, discounted pet compost equipment, dog waste compost trials in dog parks, provision of green pet waste only bins! Find examples from other regions and advocate for these in your town. **add link**
- Surveying and collecting your own information from dog and cat owners about their level of interest in helping divert their pet's waste from landfill. Local data can be a big help in building your case.

### 2020 dog owner survey

Over 76% of 1,990 dog owners responded it's *very or extremely important* to reduce dog waste to landfill!

## MORE EXAMPLES OF ADVOCACY ACTION

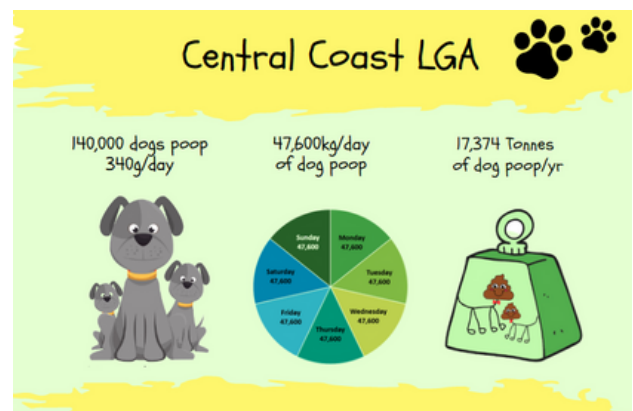
- Planning and conducting trial pet waste projects to garner local interest and collect data to make decisions about making projects ongoing. For example, dog waste composting onsite in dogs parks, trialing community 'green' bins (especially the type designed to reduce contamination of other rubbish). Find interested and relevant partners and bring them on board.
- Seeking changes in policies and rules that have a negative effect on efforts to reduce pet waste from landfill. For example, are there policies, regulations or legislation that need modification? No rule is static. Councils, agencies, departments, boards, and commissions continuously adopt, amend, or repeal regulations. Does your region have performance measures to reduce landfill tonnage? Do these targets include pet waste? Can your local sewerage system accept per waste? Is this clear to residents?

## ENCOURAGE YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL OR MUNICIPALITY TO:

- Provide pick-up bag dispensers and home certified compostable waste bags.
- Supply household and green community compost bins that accept pet waste, including dog runs and off leash areas.
- Accept pet waste in sewerage systems.
- Provide pet owners with eco-friendly pet waste information and options via their newsletters, dog renewal notices and websites.
- Provide/ use composting services and infrastructure including waste service companies that can collect and compost pet waste.

## ADVOCACY FOR DOG OWNER EDUCATION THROUGH A DRAFT RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP POLICY

A graphic was developed to highlight dog poop data for a local region. This was sent in response to a local council seeking feedback on their new Responsible Dog Ownership policy.



As part of being responsible, a request was made to Council to include information in the policy to help educate and encourage dog owners about steps they can take to divert dog waste from landfill. The data in graphic is tailored to their local dog population.

## ADVOCACY TO BUSINESSES TO SPONSOR DOG PARK COMPOSTING

An adopt a bin program in Colorado, US helps fund the compostable bags and transport of waste to a compost facility. Advocates solicited ads from local pet businesses on an annual basis.



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## ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD SUCCEEDS WITH ADVOCACY

In 2019, a young girl formed a dog park committee to create a dog park in her town of Morrystown, Vermont. Her early advocacy efforts included a dog parade to raise awareness and funds for doggie play structures and they were successful receiving funds from a local Trust Fund.

A year after planning began, they installed the dog park fence. Plans also included composting waste systems as well as a water spicket. The park utilises an environmentally friendly pet waste compost system with several buried compost bins around the park, copied from Waterbury dog park which opened in 2015.

## ADVOCACY SEEKING DONATIONS FROM DOG OWNERS TO FUND A COMMUNITY PARK DOG WASTE TRIAL

An eco-conscious community group of a local community park in an inner-city suburb of Sydney (Australia) began a dog poo trial in 2021. The group held a fundraiser via social media and signage at the park to cover the costs of the compostable bags, a dog poo only bin and commercial compost collection service. **add link**

## ADVOCACY TO SEEK TRIAL PET WASTE PROJECT FUNDING IN A HOUSING COMMUNITY

Heather Gardens is a large active senior residence in Aurora, Colorado. Their Green Team volunteers gained a city grant to start a dog waste composting pilot project. To continue their popular 3-month trial project, the Green Team successfully sought funds from the Heather Gardens Foundation Committee's ongoing budget to keep the program going. They are helping keep their community clean and re-purposing dog waste and keeping it out of landfill. **add link.**

## ADVOCACY – UNIVERSITY STUDENTS PLAY A ROLE

A small group of students from Deakin University, Australia developed resources to help bring dog waste issues to the attention of their local elected members. A series of questions developed for local councillors by the students showed how little is known about the size of their dog waste issue and landfill alternatives.



This information has paved the way to develop a targeted campaign for elected members who can influence council staff.

Students doing science, environment and education subjects and courses or just straight-out dog lovers, can be a handy source of assistance. At the same time, the students get to delve into what does actually happen to pet waste, and to consider and develop strategies to make change.

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## ADVOCACY TO SEEK FUNDING FOR DOG PARK DOG WASTE TRIAL

Volunteers who worked for years to raise funds and help build the Port Elliot Dog Park in South Australia had an advantage when they approached their local council to seek funding for a trial to divert dog park dog poop from landfill.

The Friends of the Port Elliot Dog Park had a willing coordinator, good data on the quantity of dog poop to be repurposed, and a clear plan. They not only got the green light, but also received a community environment grant to jump start the project.



## ADVOCACY ABOUT PET WASTE TRIAL TO WASTE EDUCATORS IN COUNCILS

The Port Elliot Dog Waste trial (above) completed its 12-week trial with good results and information was shared in several ways to help others learn about the trial and its results. Advocacy to other councils and other communities was undertaken via a presentation to a group of council waste educators.

Part of the trial included measuring contamination in a new "Doggie Dunnie" bin developed to reduce contamination of non-dog waste and it worked extremely well. The data collected has helped other waste educators get involved in dog waste bin trials in their regions and several have purchased these special bins. They are great for public places.

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Non-profit Englewood Unleashed (Colorado) look after a Canine Corral - a full-fenced, multi-acre off-leash dog area. They partnered with their city's park department and businesses in 2010 to overcome one of their biggest challenges - dealing with dog waste. Now, over 6 tons gets diverted from landfill and composted each year at a commercial compost facility. The program uses local business sponsorship to fund doggie bag dispenser stations via an adopt-a-bin scheme.

