

GUEST COMMENTARY

Scooping Pet Poop Helps Protect Puget Sound

By Gerry O'Keefe, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership

Talking about dog poop tends to bring out the 6-year-old in many of us. But beneath the bathroom humor lurks a serious problem that takes courage to address publicly.

We commend the cities, counties, and the Department of Ecology for helping raise awareness about the importance of cleaning up dog poop and preventing it from entering Puget Sound with a creative new video: “Dog Doogity” at www.pugetsoundstartshere.org/scoop-poop/.

The least expensive way to fight pollution is to prevent it in the first place. Increasing public awareness of how to stop pollutants from entering the Sound is an important strategy to making Puget Sound healthy again. It is one of the top five priorities in the Action Agenda – the regional plan for restoring the health of Puget Sound.

This is why a group of state and local governments launched the “Puget Sound Starts Here” public awareness effort, which gives Puget Sound residents the information they need to help protect the Sound. The “Dog Doogity” video is one of many creative efforts to raise awareness.

Yes, dog poop is only one of the problems. That’s why the Partnership also helped advance efforts to remove copper (another significant pollutant) from car brake pads and the paint on boat hulls, and to improve oil spill prevention and response. Cleaning up after dog waste just happens to be one of the easiest pollutions to prevent.

Making small changes in the way we live our lives, such as picking up your dog waste, is good for our kids and for Puget Sound.

So thanks to our partners for their creativity and collaboration to raise the awareness of many of us who care for the estimated 1.2 million dogs living around the Sound.

Read more about why dog waste is a problem at: www.psp.wa.gov.