

Spotlight on Business

In 2015, \$60.28 billion was spent on pet services in the United States with an increase expected at \$62.75 billion in 2016. A segment of this statistic is the pooper scooper business. According to the American Pet Product Manufacturers Association, the pooper-scooper business is a \$2.7 billion industry, growing at 10% rate.

One such City of Roanoke based business is Dogscapes. Dogscapes is a locally-owned and operated pooper-scooper business currently serving the Roanoke, Salem, Botetourt and Vinton areas. Year round services are offered on a weekly, bi-weekly, and every other week basis so pet owners can enjoy a healthy, happy and attractive environment for their family and pets.

Owner Michael Sinnott says "It a growing business which is underrepresented in the Roanoke area. Once you get past the comments from friends and family about it being a 'crappy business,' or 'are you going to be number 1 in the number 2 business,' you realize you're really offering a service people want or need. One pooper-scooper business owner refers to himself as the 'Chief Excrement Officer.' That would make my mom proud."

The biggest sector using this service is baby boomers with expendable income and empty nest syndrome. "Families and professionals are busy and when they have spare time they want to spend it enjoying their pets, not cleaning up after them," Sinnott said. Other folks who use the service are seniors citizens who love their pets but cleaning up after them has become challenging. Additionally residential and commercial property owners, Home Owner Associations and apartment complexes, and people who find the task displeasing and want to be able to use their back yard." Sinnott said, "It amazes me how many people have quit using their back yards because it's primarily used as the dog(s) restroom area. They may attempt a once a year clean up before a graduation party or family gathering, but that is about the extent of it. This is a great opportunity to reclaim your backyard and keep your pets from dragging the contents of the backyard back into your house."

Roanoke City recently placed a flier with your personal property tax information and it was titled "Here's the Scoop." In it they stated some interesting facts. Roanoke City is home to 7,055 registered dogs. That is 141 dogs per neighborhood. The average dog creates 117 pounds of waste per year. You can "doo" the math. The problem is that not all poops are equal. Manure is plant based and is good to use as a fertilizer, but dog diets are protein based and the results are very acidic. Acid is harmful to your grass and the bacterial in the fecal matter is harmful to children. Parasites, viruses, and bacteria like Hookworm, Parvo Virus, Roundworms, Giardia and Whipworm can be transmitted. When it rains those harmful bacteria plus other diseases make their way into our rivers and streams, and can cause low oxygen levels and algae blooms that are harmful to aquatic life.

Dogscapes offers an affordable solution to many of these problems. At approximately \$11 per stop, a uniformed technician will arrive in a marked vehicle. The technician will sweep the service area in a grid like fashion including flower beds and porches. Product will be bagged and removed from property at no additional charge. Gates will be checked and double checked and we'll leave notification when service is completed. In addition, we sanitize our equipment and shoes after each yard to ensure pet health. Dogscapes also offers one time cleanups, odor neutralizing spray, can spray down dog runs and can fill water dishes while we are on the property. Discounts are offered to senior citizens (over 65), disabled veterans and service dogs. Dogscapes offers flat rate monthly pricing so that the bill does not fluctuate each month.

For commercial properties, Dogscapes can service apartment complexes, HOA's, play areas, and other properties. We can work an entire property or simply service a few problem areas. Ask about the professional installation and management of pet waste stations too. "Free up your maintenance people for maintenance and be able to sell potential clients on the fact that you are concerned about their pets health. Some apartment facilities have stations but they are not serviced properly or the property managers feel cleaning up pet waste is below their job description. With the growing number of pet owners in the City of Roanoke, you shouldn't be concerned about how pet friendly apartments will affect tenants without a pet. You can show them you are concerned about both by offering a solution." Sinnott said. Gift cards are also available for neighbors, friends, and new home owners or homes you'd like to keep clean while you're listing them.

If you are interested in how Dogscapes can improve your household cleanliness or the home of a family member or friend, or if you'd like to make your business more attractive to those clients with or without dogs visit us at www.dogscapesva.com or call Michael Sinnott at 540-797-5792.

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PET WASTE REMOVAL

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