

Dog Fouling and the Law

Dog fouling is the offence of being in charge of a dog and failing to remove the dog mess from a public place.

On 22nd July 2008, The Fouling of Land by Dogs ([Sedgemoor District Council](#)) Order came into effect. It is the responsibility of the dog owner to clean up after the dog if it fouls in a public area. Failure to do so may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice of £75, or a criminal conviction in Court. If you refuse to pay the fine, you can be taken to court and fined up to £1,000.

The law was introduced following a consultation open to residents and organisations. The Order applies to all public land including beaches, along with all locations where the public has permission to access private land.

If you are aware of anyone not clearing up after their dog please report it to us. Any information provided will be treated confidentially.

Where does the law apply?

There are not always signs. The law applies almost everywhere once you are outside your own garden. It covers parks, footpaths, open spaces, verges, alleyways, playing fields, beaches and any other public place. There are now many signs up in these areas, however the law applies regardless of signage.

What happens if I do not clean up after my dog?

The Council can issue an on-the-spot fixed penalty notice of £75. However, the maximum fine in a Magistrates Court is £1,000. There are Dog Wardens patrolling the District to carry out enforcement of the law. We also receive reports from the public.

Why do I have to pick it up?

- ✓ It damages your local environment.
- ✓ It increases tension between dog owners and others.
- ✓ It ruins everyone's enjoyment of walking in our parks.
- ✓ It prevents children running freely and can make sports fields unusable.
- ✓ It is a very unpleasant to remove from shoes, wheelchair and pushchair wheels.
- ✓ Apart from it being unsightly, smelly and attracting flies the dog faeces can carry parasites that can cause us harm.

If it is so dangerous, I am not going to pick it up.

Dog waste is not dangerous if it is picked up correctly. Use a bag or a pooper scooper so you do not touch the waste and it is perfectly safe to collect.

No one else bothers to pick it up. Why should I?

Most dog owners in Sedgemoor are very responsible as evidenced by the many tonnes of dog waste we collect from dog bins every year. It is the law and therefore you have to pick it up.

Is anyone exempt from the law?

Yes. People who are registered blind are not expected to clean up after their dog.

If you feel you have a genuine reason why you should be exempt please speak with the Dog Warden at the time. If you are in this position you should train your dog to go at home if possible.