

FY 2012 San Diego County Think Blue Regional Event Surveys: Pet Waste Surveys Topline Results by Event

FINAL REPORT

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San Diego County Think Blue Regional Pet Waste Survey Results

FY 2012

SUMMARY

Pet waste event survey data were collected at the Think Blue San Diego Region booth during two outreach events: Paws at the Park on March 25, 2012 and the Apartment Association Education Expo on April 17, 2012. Individuals who visited the booth were asked to complete a brief survey. The focus of the survey was on pet waste and stormwater pollution. A complete list of the survey items is attached as Appendix A.

A total of 217 pet waste event surveys were collected across the two events. Results are presented in aggregate below and then separately for each event.

Overall Findings

Participant Characteristics

- **Language:** 100% of surveys were completed in English.
- **Gender:** Of those reporting gender, (N=207), 28% were male and 72% were female.
- **Age:** The average age of participants was 42 years (N=170).
- **Residency:** Of the respondents who provided residency information,
 - 99% reported residence in the state of California, and
 - 96% reported residence in San Diego County.
 - (North=60%, South=3%, East=12%, Central=22%)
 - 22% listed an address in the City of San Diego (N=199).
- **Dog Ownership:** 87% of respondents said that they own a dog.
- **Interest List:** 39% provided an address or e-mail to join the Think Blue mailing list.

Think Blue Awareness

- 60% of respondents had seen or heard of Think Blue before attending the event.
 - Of those who had heard of Think Blue, 54% saw or heard of it on television, 16% heard of it on the radio, and 11% saw or heard of it at another event.
- 65% of respondents knew that storm water is not treated, 13% believed it was treated, and 22% reported that they did not know.

Pet Waste Awareness

- **How much do you think dog waste contributes to pollution of local waterways?**
 - 34% responded “a lot,” 47% said “a moderate amount,” 18% said “a small amount,” and 1% responded “not at all”; ($M=3.13$ out of 4).
- **Which of the following are correct methods of disposing dog waste?**
 - 88% correctly responded “put it in the trash can,” 9% responded “bury it,” and 6% responded “move it to a landscaped area.” Multiple responses were allowed.

- **Pet waste in the community:** 86% said that they see dog waste in their community that is not cleaned up at least sometimes (Always=16%, Often=30%, Sometimes=41%, Rarely=13%, Never=1%); ($M=3.47$ on a 5-pt scale).

Pet Waste Management Behavior

- **Where do you most often walk your dog?** 72% reported that they walk their dog in their neighborhood, 32% said in the park, and 13% said at the beach. Multiple responses were allowed.
- **Frequency of pet waste pick up:** 97% of respondents reported that they always pick up after their dog while on walks, 2% said they sometimes do, and 1% said they rarely or never do; ($M=3.89$ out of 4).
- **Reasons for not picking up:** 112 survey respondents (52%) named a reason they had not picked up after their dog in the past; 43% said they did not have a bag, 22% said they always pick up after their dog, and 7% said their dog had diarrhea.

Conclusions

- ***The Think Blue outreach booths continue to be an effective means of directly reaching San Diego residents.*** Almost all (96%) of booth visitors who completed a pet waste survey reported living within the County of San Diego and 22% resided in the City of San Diego.
- ***Many visitors to the Think Blue booth are hearing about the program for the first time.*** Over one-third (40%) of booth visitors who completed a survey had not heard of the Think Blue program prior to the event.
- ***More than half (51%) of respondents who had heard about Think Blue before attending the event reported being exposed to the program through television.*** Respondents also reported hearing about Think Blue on the radio (16%) or at another event (11%).
- ***Two-thirds (65%) of booth visitors who completed a survey were already aware that storm water is treated. For those that believed that storm water is treated or who were unsure, the booth visit represented an excellent opportunity for one-on-one education.*** Just over one-third (35%) of respondents either believed that storm water was treated or were unsure. This equates to over 75 booth visitors who had the potential to receive education from booth staff.
- ***More than three-fourths of booth visitors who completed a survey were dog owners.*** Across all events, 87% of survey respondents reported owning a dog.
- ***Respondents reported seeing dog waste in their community that is not cleaned up.*** Across all events, 86% or more respondents reported seeing dog waste in their community that is not cleaned up at least sometimes. Almost half (45%) of respondents said they “often” or “always” see pet waste in their community and only 1% of respondents said they “never” see it. This indicates that pet waste that is not properly cleaned up is an issue in San Diego communities and residents are aware of it.

- ***Most people agree that dog waste contributes at least a moderate amount to storm water pollution.*** Overall, 81% of respondents said that dog waste contributes “a lot” or a “moderate amount” to storm water pollution. However, there is still a sizeable portion of survey respondents that believe that pet waste contributes only a “small amount” to pollution (18%) or “not at all” (1%).
- ***Respondents were generally knowledgeable of correct methods for cleaning up dog waste.*** A large majority of respondents (88%) were able to identify that picking up pet waste and throwing it in the trash is the correct method to clean up pet waste. The next most selected answer (9%) was “to bury it,” and 6% responded “move it to a landscaped area.”
- ***Most people reported that they walk their dog in their neighborhood.*** Although some people reported they walk their dog at the park (32%) or the beach (13%), the largest number of people said that they walk their dog in their neighborhood (72%).
- ***The number one reason people reported they did not pick up their dog waste was because they did not have a bag or they ran out of bags.*** Most respondents reported that they always pick up their pet waste (92%). However, when asked if there was ever a time that they did not, 43% of respondents reported that it was because of not having a bag to pick it up (N=113).

EVENT SPECIFIC ANALYSES

Table 1 below shows the events in which the pet waste surveys were implemented along with the number of completed surveys collected at each event. In the remainder of this report, the detailed survey results are presented separately for each event.

Table 1: Completed Surveys by Event

#	Event	Date	# Surveys
1	Paws at the Park	March 25, 2012	170
2	Apartment Association Education Expo	April 17, 2012	47
		TOTAL	217

Event #1: Paws in the Park

Event survey data were collected at the Paws in the Park event on March 25, 2012. A total of 170 surveys were completed (100% English).

Participant Characteristics

- Of those who reported their gender, (N=165), 26% were male and 74% were female.
- The average age of participants was 41 years (N=128).
- Of the respondents who provided residency information,
 - 99% reported residence in the state of California, and
 - 95% reported residence in San Diego County.
 - (North=68%, South=1%, East=5%, Central=22%)
 - 22% listed an address in the City of San Diego (N=161).
- 94% of respondents said that they own a dog.
- 35% provided an address or e-mail to join the Think Blue mailing list.

Think Blue Awareness

- 60% of respondents had seen or heard of Think Blue before attending the event.
 - Of those who had heard of Think Blue, 56% saw or heard of it on television, 15% heard of it on the radio, and 11% saw or heard of it at another event.
- 65% of respondents knew that storm water is not treated, 14% believed it was treated, and 21% reported that they did not know.

Pet Waste Awareness

- **How much do you think dog waste contributes to pollution of local waterways?**
 - 34% responded “a lot,” 47% said “a moderate amount,” 18% said “a small amount,” and 1% responded “not at all”; ($M=3.13$ out of 4).
- **Which of the following are correct methods of disposing dog waste?**
 - 88% correctly responded “put it in the trash can,” 11% responded “bury it,” and 7% responded “move it to a landscaped area.” Multiple responses were allowed.
- **Pet waste in the community:** 88% said that they see dog waste in their community that is not cleaned up at least sometimes (Always=16%, Often=27%, Sometimes=45%, Rarely=12%, Never=1%); ($M=3.46$ on a 5-pt scale).

Pet Waste Management Behavior

- **Where do you most often walk your dog?** 73% reported that they walk their dog in their neighborhood, 37% said in the park and 15% said at the beach. Multiple responses were allowed.
- **Frequency of pet waste pick up:** 92% of respondents reported that they “always” pick up after their dog while on walks, 6% said they “usually” do, and 1% stated that they “rarely” or “never” do; ($M=3.90$ out of 4).
- **Reasons for not picking up:** 93 survey respondents (55%) named a reason they had not picked up after their dog in the past; 48% said they did not have a bag, 17% said they always pick up after their dog, and 7% said their dog had diarrhea.

Event #2: Apartment Association Education Expo

Event survey data were collected at the Apartment Association Education Expo event on April 17, 2012. A total of 47 surveys were completed (100% English).

Participant Characteristics

- Of those who reported their gender, (N=42), 38% were male and 62% were female.
- The average age of participants was 45 years (N=35).
- Of the respondents who provided residency information, and
 - 100% reported residence in the state of California.
 - 100% reported residence in San Diego County.
 - (North=26%, South=11%, East=39%, Central=24%)
 - 24% listed an address in the City of San Diego (N=38).
- 60% of respondents said that they own a dog.
- 53% provided an address or e-mail to join the Think Blue mailing list.

Think Blue Awareness

- 62% of respondents had seen or heard of Think Blue before attending the event.
 - Of those who had heard of Think Blue, 36% saw or heard of it on television, 26% heard of it on the radio, and 9% saw or heard of it at another event.
- 64% of respondents knew that storm water is not treated, 9% believed it was treated, and 27% reported that they did not know.

Pet Waste Awareness

- **How much do you think dog waste contributes to pollution of local waterways?**
 - 33% responded “a lot,” 49% said “a moderate amount,” 16% said “a small amount,” and 2% responded “not at all”; ($M=3.13$ out of 4).
- **Which of the following are correct methods of disposing dog waste?**
 - 87% correctly responded “put it in the trash can,” 4% responded “bury it,” and 4% responded “leave it to decompose.” Multiple responses were allowed.
- **Pet waste in the community:** 80% said that they see dog waste in their community that is not cleaned up at least sometimes (Always=15%, Often=39%, Sometimes=26%, Rarely=20%, Never=0%); ($M=3.50$ on a 5-pt scale).

Pet Waste Management Behavior

- **Where do you most often walk your dog?** 49% reported that they walk their dog in their neighborhood, 17% said in the park, and 9% said at the beach. Multiple responses were allowed.
- **Frequency of pet waste pick up:** 91% of respondents reported that they “always” pick up after their dog while on walks, and 9% said that they “sometimes” do. No respondents stated that they “rarely” or “never” do; ($M=3.81$ out of 4).
- **Reasons for not picking up:** 19 survey respondents (40%) named a reason they had not picked up after their dog in the past; 47% said that they always pick up after their dog, 16% said they did not have a bag, and 16% said that it was dark and they couldn’t find it.

APPENDIX A: Survey Items

The survey included a series of items designed to assess knowledge, awareness, and behavior regarding pet waste management practices and storm water pollution. Table 2 below shows the items that were included on the survey along with the associated constructs assessed.

Table 2: Event Survey Items

#	Item	Response Type	Construct
1	Before attending today's event, had you ever seen or heard the slogan, "Think Blue San Diego?"	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Awareness
2	When water goes into the storm drains in San Diego, does it go to a sewage treatment plant before it is released, or is it released into creeks or the ocean without treatment?"	<input type="checkbox"/> Treated <input type="checkbox"/> Not Treated <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know	Knowledge
3	How often do you see dog waste in your community that is not cleaned up?	1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Often 5. Always	Awareness
4	How much do you think dog waste contributes to pollution of local waters?	1. Not at all 2. Small amount 3. Moderate amount 4. A lot	Awareness
5	Which of the following are correct methods of disposing of dog waste? (Multiple responses allowed.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Bury it <input type="checkbox"/> Leave it to decompose <input type="checkbox"/> Put it in trash can <input type="checkbox"/> Hose it into street <input type="checkbox"/> Move it to landscaped area	Knowledge
6	Where do you most often walk your dog? (Multiple responses allowed.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Beach <input type="checkbox"/> My neighborhood <input type="checkbox"/> I don't walk my dog	Behavior
7	If your dog poops while on a walk, how often do you clean it up?	1. Never 2. Sometimes 3. Usually 4. Always	Behavior
8	If there were ever a time that you didn't pick up after your dog what was the reason?	Open ended	Behavior
9	Please provide your information to join the Think Blue mailing list.	Open-ended	Interest List