

Communities in Bloom Alberta



Poopy Bags...

Compostable or not?



Who has a dog?

Here come some facts....

The Facts...

- 7.9 million dogs in Canada
- Average dog produces 270+ pounds of poop every year
- Collectively – 2,133,000,000 pounds per year
 - Enough to fill approximately 387,000,000 Olympic swimming pools



I've had nightmares about this....

- 7.9 million dogs in Canada - If everyone is a responsible dog owner, that's gonna be around 7 million poop bags a day.
- Average dog produces 270+ pounds of poop every year
- Collectively – 2,133,000,000 pounds per year
 - Enough to fill approximately 387,000,000 Olympic swimming pools

Types of Poopy Bags

- Compostable
- Biodegradable
- Single Use plastic & recycled plastic



Which are you using?



We can break down the types of poopy bags into 3 categories:

Compostable

Biodegradable

Single Use

Which are you using and what's the difference?

Single Use Plastic/Recycled Plastic

Estimated Decomposition

Landfill - 100-1000 years

Industrial Composting – No degradation



On a world wide basis we are moving away from Single Use plastics... like shopping bags.

BUT we have spent a generation throwing garbage out in single use plastics In the distant future some archeologist is going to find a Walmart plastic bag, and when they open it the poop in it will still be fresh. That should screw up their heads

Biodegradable

Estimated Decomposition

Landfill - 10–90 years

Industrial Composting - decades



Biodegradable is a tricky term. Truly biodegradable materials can be broken down effectively, but the pace of the degradation depends heavily on environment conditions.

There is a term used to mislead consumers – greenwashing. Misleading labels sometimes mask the truth about biodegradable plastics – which degrade so slowly they fragment into microplastics... Yikes.

Biodegradable has no required testing or timeline – a plastic bag will technically biodegrade over enough centuries.

Compostable

Estimated Decomposition

Landfill - 10–90 years

Industrial Composting – 1-6 months



Industrial Composting is not your backyard composter!

Industrial composting uses huge vessels, high temperatures and is regulated.

How to tell it's compostable?

It says **COMPOSTABLE** on the packaging

If the product has met third party testing standards:



ASTM D6400
ISO 17088 (2021)



IS/ISO 17088



American Society for Testing & Materials

ASTM D6400 - Standard Specification for Labelling of Plastics Designed to be Aerobically Composted in Municipal or Industrial Facilities – where temperature, moisture and microorganisms are regulated

International Standards Organization
ISO 17088 (2021)

Biodegradable Products Institutes – certifies products that meet ASTM D6400 or ISO 1788 (third party testing)

Government suggestions on bags:

- Displays the compostable on the package – this refers to industrial composting facilities
- Displays the word COMPOSTABLE
- May say 'non-recyclable
- Be green tinted or have green labeling

Government Regulation at this point:

Can your community compost compostable plastic?

Calgary – Yes, including pooppy

Edmonton – Yeah, but not pooppy bags...

Red Deer – Yes, including pooppy

Lethbridge – Nope and nope to pooppy

Cold Lake – yes, but not pooppy

Check yours!



Dog Parks

Check local rules for composting and provide a disposal container with information at the dispenser.



I love that communities provide poopy bags to dog walkers!

My Conclusion



If your community allows compostable plastics AND allows pet doo doo....



If not...
Huck it in the black bin for the landfill



But always use **compostable** poop bags!



The science behind the different plastics and their decomposition time frame is stunning – I went down that google rabbit hole.

Essentially, I came to a simple conclusion for managing your doggy dung ...

Always use compostable poop bags – saves some archeologist from stepping in it 1000 years from now.

Key Takeaways

- Check the labeling – look for the logos!
- Check your own community rules for composting
- Communicate! Let people know what they can use, and how to use effectively



And... just a note: NEVER put poopy or poopy bags into your backyard compost – just won't work. You'll be picking it out after a few years... just like the banana peel labels. Your backyard composter will never get hot enough to eliminate potentially harmful bacteria from the poopy.

Questions?

Thank you for your time & attention!

