

Doggy Doo Blues

Dear Covenant Cat:

My neighbor has an out-of-control dog that is constantly running loose and doing his business on my lawn. What can the village office do about this?

– Disgusted on Dry Leaf Path

Dear Disgusted:

Like you, I find dogs extremely annoying, especially when their owners don't keep them on a short leash! Unfortunately, the village office has no authority over pet behavior. Only Animal Control can help you with this issue.

Howard County law requires that dog owners keep their dogs leashed at all times and immediately pick up all dog waste on someone else's property. Many dog owners don't realize the importance of abiding by these laws. Abandoned pet waste produces up to 30% of the bacteria (e.g. E.coli, parvovirus, heartworm, giardiasis) that pollute our streams and rivers. Yuck! Even the *friendliest* dogs can seem threatening to those who aren't dog lovers (like you & me), so pet owners should always keep dogs leashed even if they have a well-behaved pooch. It's considerate and it's the law!

The village office can't investigate complaints about animal behavior. To report a violation of Animal Control laws, you must file an affidavit with Animal Control. For more information about the affidavit process, call 410-313-2780 or visit www.howardcountymd.gov/animalcontrol.htm. If you don't feel comfortable reporting your neighbor, maybe having a conversation with him about how his dog's behavior impacts your household would help. I know it feels like you've got it *ruff* living next to an annoying dog, but I have one living WITH me! Blech!

Hugs & Kittens,

Covenant Cat