

Want to make a MILLION?



The Corridon family from Port Monmouth, New Jersey, finally gave in when their children reached 10 and 12. But in exchange for the pup, Corridon said she made her kids promise to pick up anything the dog left behind in the garden. That deal lasted a month. So Corridon repurposed the children's weekly allowance, or pocket money, and hired a company called When Doody Calls, for \$9 a week.

Picking up the poo isn't an extra, it really has to be done.



It wasn't science that got Meg Retinger into the business of poo but a misplaced shoe. If there's one thing that's clear about this dirty business, it's that it's making a serious profit. (Credit: Alamy)

Back in 2008, one of her company's scientists came to work complaining that he had stepped in dog poo before work that morning. At the time, BioPet Vet Lab Inc in Knoxville, Tennessee, sold DNA testing kits that detect the breeds of a mutt.

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But then the company had a ground-breaking idea. In 2010 the firm started selling kits that could test the DNA of dog droppings. PooPrints is now in all 50 states in the US, Canada, and expanding internationally. The system is marketed mostly to owners and managers of apartment buildings, which require owners to register the DNA of their pets before they sign the lease. Any misplaced surprise is then tested, and the owner is sent a fine.



The tests, called PooPrints, are now the company's primary business. Nearly 3,000 apartments, mostly in North America, have signed up for the service, which costs \$50 for the initial DNA test and \$75 per sample. Costs of the tests are passed along, Retinger explained, in the form of fines to the "poo-petrators."

Dog-owners at Timberwood are given a \$50 fine the first time, \$100 for the second, and \$200 for the third. After that, the complex will ask the offending mutt and owner to move out — something that has happened only once.

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“After three strikes, it’s like, it’s not working, and we really don’t want you to stay if you can’t pick up after your dog,” Violette said. “Most people get it, but there is usually one or two people who just can’t seem to figure out we mean business.”



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Forget solar, human waste also has the potential to become an efficient renewable energy source. Bus operator, First West of England, began [running a 40-seat Bio-Bus that runs on biomethane gas generated from sewage](#) and food waste. Now, First West has proposed adding another 110 waste-powered double-deckers. The “poo bus”, which is fuelled by the Bristol sewage treatment works, has become so popular that rival Wessex Bus has also applied for a government grant to run 20 bio-buses by 2019.



Poo also has a growing value for doctors. Increasingly, [human faeces is being turned into medicine](#), injected or ingested by patients fighting infections.

The idea that human faeces could be used in this way was little known in 2005 when Catherine Duff, now 60 and living in Indiana, developed an infection after taking an antibiotic. The infection led to nausea, diarrhoea and other health problems so severe she couldn’t leave the house. Seven years after her problems began, her doctor recommended removing her colon. But even with surgery, the doctor told her that her chances of survival were slim.

Instead of a colon transplant, Duff decided to try something different altogether : [a faecal microbiota transplant](#), after which her health improved almost immediately. Donated poo meant she could lead a normal life again.

It's serious work benefitting the medical community, and it's often met with lots of snickers, said Sasha Liberman, with the stool bank. "You get a really long line of responses when you tell people what you do," she said. "A lot of people tend to think it's really gross, but when you explain it, they're often really fascinated."