

# Supplemental Information For Dog Owners in Southborough

Dogs are important members of our family and walking in nature can be one of the most enjoyable activities we do with our pets. While dogs are welcome in Southborough, there are some important dog walking restrictions that owners need to keep in mind when choosing where to walk their dog.

Most of Southborough is in a protected watershed. The Sudbury reservoir serves as a backup drinking water supply for millions of people. This means the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), [Division of Water Supply Protection](#) (DWSP) manages the land adjacent to and near the reservoir. It also means that the [Watershed Protection Act](#) governs all the land use and activities in the watershed. For this reason, DCR prohibits dog walking on watershed properties.



These restrictions are in place to protect our conservation lands, our trails, our wildlife habitat, our water, and to keep Southborough clean and beautiful. In addition, Southborough has a **dog bylaw** that requires all **dog owners to remove and properly dispose of any dog waste** and to always keep dogs under control.<sup>1</sup>

## Where is Dog Walking Prohibited?

Dog walking is not allowed on any athletic field, the Sudbury Reservoir Trail (also known as Boroughs Loop/Aqueduct Trail), and the Bay Circuit Trail. Most of these trails are maintained by the Trails Committee and are located on land owned by the [DCR](#) and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority ([MWRA](#)). Please visit the Southborough Trails Committee Website for more information: [southboroughtrails.org](http://southboroughtrails.org)

## Why is Pet Waste Harmful for the Environment?

- Dog waste contains harmful bacteria that can make people sick and can be carried into our water supplies by rain or snowmelt
  - Examples: Giardia, Cryptosporidium, Salmonella, E.coli, Campylobacter
- Dog waste provides excess nutrients to area water bodies which can lead to detrimental effects including:
  - Overgrowth of nuisance aquatic plants
  - Fish kills
  - Harmful Algal Blooms, which can make people, pets, and wildlife sick
  - Swimming beach closures
- Southborough has more than 1,400 registered dogs (2022)
  - One dog can produce up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds of solid waste every day
  - That's over 1,000 pounds of solid dog waste a day



## How Can You Help?

Always pick up after your dog and properly dispose of all dog waste in a trash receptacle; please refrain from throwing dog waste in storm water catch basins which drain directly into waterways and are not treated. Please adhere to the posted rules of the properties you are visiting and keep in mind that we share them with our neighbors and wildlife.

*This information is brought to you by the Southborough [Stewardship](#) and [Trails](#) Committee as part of a 2021 Choate Fund Grant.*

<sup>1</sup> Southborough Dog Bylaw <https://ecode360.com/S01070/search?query=dog&scope=all&sortOrder=relevance&selections=>