

Downtown Norfolk and 'Mr. Brown' have a message for dog owners: Scoop the poop

By *Hillary Smith* on February 26, 2016

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“Mr. Brown,” an emoji, is the face of the Downtown Norfolk Council’s campaign to rid sidewalks and streets of dog droppings. (courtesy photo)

More people living in Downtown Norfolk means more dogs, and those dogs — and their owners — are leaving behind a growing problem.

City ambassadors are increasingly seeing dog poop on the streets, and residents are reporting it to their property managers as well, according to Jessica Kliner, director of marketing and communications for the [Downtown Norfolk Council](#).

The prevalence of droppings has become such an issue that the Downtown Norfolk Council this week launched a social media campaign with an emoji (an anthropomorphic pile of feces), a hashtag (#scoopthepoopnfk) and a message (no poop left behind).

The council wants to make residents more aware of how pet waste affects Downtown and the environment. The campaign will use videos and photos of residents properly disposing of their pet’s waste, with captions such as, “Mary picks it up – do you?”

“It’s become an issue recently,” Kliner said. “And we want to try and generate awareness to help with the issue.”

The Downtown Council hasn’t heard of pet waste hurting retail, “but overall, in any setting be it a residential neighborhood or downtown it is unpleasant,” she added by email.

The team behind the campaign decided on the emoji, dubbed “Mr. Brown,” as the icon for the campaign.

Pet waste gets into rivers, streams and other water bodies, and can threaten human health, according the [Environmental Protection Agency](#).

The Downtown Norfolk Council began installing dog bags on trash cans throughout Downtown in 2008. There are now 23 trash cans in the area that offer free bags.

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