

## Help Your Pets Go Green

### Dr. Ruth MacPete, DVM

Ruth has more than 15 years of experience in the veterinary industry as a companion animal veterinarian in private practice. Along with being a writer and media personality, she is also a founding member of IDEXX's Pet Health Network team.

[Dr. Ruth MacPete](#) gives some great Earth Day tips! For more from Dr. MacPete, find her on [Facebook](#) or at [www.drruthpetvet.com](http://www.drruthpetvet.com)!

You drive a hybrid and bring your own bags to the grocery store. You care about greenhouse gases and your carbon footprint. What about your pet's carbon pawprint? Is your pet living a green, eco-friendly life? April 22nd is Earth Day. What can you do this Earth Day to make sure that your pets are living green too?

### Waste Management

Anyone who has ever had a pet knows that they create lots of waste. It is estimated that 10 million tons of waste from pets fill landfills yearly. What can be done? Instead of using plastic bags to pick up and dispose of your pet's waste, try using recycled biodegradable pet poop bags. If you have a cat, switch from a clay-based litter to a biodegradable litter to cut down on the estimated 2 million tons of clay litter that end up in landfills yearly.

### Give A Hoot, Don't Pollute

Always pick-up after your pet and follow the backpacker's motto of leaving only footprints behind. Besides being inconsiderate, leaving your pet's waste behind can pollute water sources when runoff washes into streams and lakes.

### Buy Green

Purchase pet beds, furniture and toys made from recycled or sustainable materials such as hemp. Environmentally friendly hemp can be used to make almost everything, like leashes, collars, beds and toys.

### Buy Extra Food

Buying your regular pet food in greater volume not only saves money, it also conserves fuel and lowers

emissions by saving you extra trips to the store.

### Pet Overpopulation

Make sure your pet isn't adding to the pet overpopulation problem by having your pets spayed or neutered.

### Adopt a Shelter Pet

Don't forget about your local animal shelter if you are thinking about getting a pet. There are lots of "recycled pets" that need a good home. While adopting one of these deserving pets may not lower emissions or save fuel, it can save a life.

By adopting these simple tips, you and your pet can live green and make the planet a better place. For more information about some of my favorite green pet products and where to find them be sure to read my next blog.

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian - they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*