

Dogs On Beaches Enforcement & Potential Sign Changes

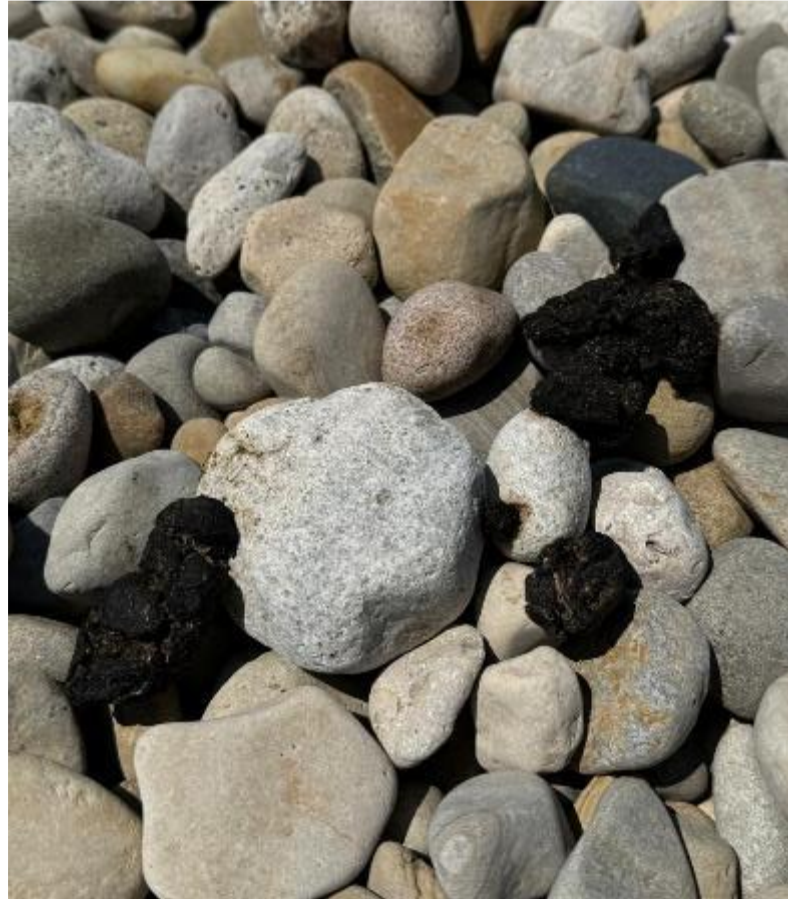
Presentation to Town Council

September 9th , 2024

Dog's On Beaches & Off Leash All Summer



Dog Waste On Beaches



▶ WHY ARE BEACHES POSTED WITH WARNING SIGNS?

▼ WHAT ARE SOME FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BEACH WATER QUALITY?

- Seasonal and storm surface run-off into rivers and lakes
- Pet waste run-off
- Large populations of waterfowl (geese, seagulls, etc.)
- Warm water temperatures
- Malfunctioning private sewage disposal systems
- Boating wastes
- Agricultural manure run-off

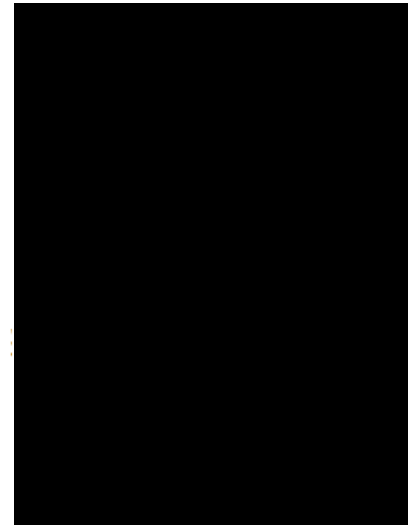
▼ HOW CAN I HELP KEEP OUR BEACHES CLEAN?

You can help keep the beaches clean by following these few simple tips:

- Not feeding animals or birds
- Observing local "stoop and scoop" by-laws and always pick up your pets waste

Enforcement of “test” has been difficult

- Local residents followed the recommended procedure for enforcement by calling the by-law officer or the non-emergency police line all this summer
- By-Law officer seemed very busy and suggested to just call the Police
- By-law officer was unavailable after July as she resigned her position
- Non-emergency police line staff were friendly but would say “we will let an officer know”
- Residents would call daily and rarely see any enforcement
- Almost everyday dogs off leash and on the beach between 9am – 6pm



Issues in both Port Elgin & Southampton

- Gobles Beach, area south of the CAW road, and Shipley Trail all experience regular dog off leash issues
- Local residents frustrated but many don't want to call for enforcement for fear of any potential "confrontations" with dog owners
- Using the Police to monitor dogs is not a good use of police time or scarce resources
- Currently seems to be a "Reactive" approach to enforcement versus having more "Proactive" patrols
- **Could one approach be to improve the signage to "Proactively" help our officers?**

Current Signage Could Be Clearer

- Current signs confusing at first glance since only the small bottom sign mentions dog restrictions
- Visitors have to read two signs to try to understand the by-law rules
- “Dogs Prohibited 9am – 6pm” is the last thing on the signage at the very bottom
- By-law and Police Officer feedback is the signs create challenges for enforcement
- Could be clearer - especially for the summer months
- **Could we adjust the signs to proactively help our busy officers??**



Revised Signage Option 1

- Just one clear sign
- Welcome message from the Town
- Much easier to read and clear about the by-law rules
- Moves back toward historical restricted summer times
- Historically dogs were prohibited May 1 – Oct 1
- A compromise would be to make the date range shorter June 1 – Aug 30
- Dogs would therefore be allowed on the beach on a leash for 9/12 of the months of the year (75%)



Revised Signage Option 2

- Just one clear sign
- Welcome message from the Town
- Much easier to read and clear about the by-law rules
- Option 2 continues the current “Dog Zone” test that was started in June 2023 – if Council chooses to continue
- Clearly says Dogs Prohibited 9am-6pm
- Then says dogs on a leash allowed before 9am and after 6pm



Summary

- Enforcement of new dog “test” by-law is proving to be difficult
 - By-law officers and police officers are stretched thin to provide assistance
 - Improved signage would present an opportunity to help with enforcement
 - A return to the previous by-law of no dogs on the beaches in the summer months (with a shorter June-Aug window) also would be clear and easier to enforce
-
- Thank-you for your consideration