



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**Pet Cleanup is Going Green in Highlands Ranch**

The Highlands Ranch Metro District is partnering with dog owners to save costs and implement green practices when it comes to cleaning up after dogs in the District's parks and open space. Parks, Recreation and Open Space staff developed a new TREX dog bag dispenser that will be tested at several locations throughout Highlands Ranch. The self-service "bring one, take one" dispenser allows the District to accomplish three goals:

- Promote Stewardship – The Metro District encourages residents to be good dog owners by cleaning up after their pets while recycling plastic bags.
- Implement Green Practices – The new dog bag dispensers provide an outlet to recycle grocery bags that currently are not accepted by local recycling companies.
- Reduce Costs – Replacing current dog dispensers stocked with purchased bags with a new self-service dispenser allows for a potential cost savings up to \$16,000 annually. The savings would be seen in dog waste bag and dispenser purchases. By encouraging park guests to bring and take unwanted plastic bags they have at home, these costs could be reduced or eliminated.

"In the Metro District's 2009 Citizen Survey we asked respondents if they'd support a dog bag dispenser that allows residents to recycle their bags. We had an overwhelmingly positive response with 93 percent strongly or somewhat supporting the program," said Tom Hoby, director of parks, recreation and open space. "These new self-service dog bag dispensers benefit dog owners, the environment, and tax payers as well as they could save thousands of dollars currently spent by the Metro District to supply bags."

The new dispensers will be installed at select locations the week of June 15. Metro District staff will monitor these test sites through the remainder of the year. Staff will determine project success through visitor feedback, use of the dispensers and signs of decreased pet waste in parks and open space. The 23 dispensers involved in the trial equal 15 percent of the Metro District's total inventory of 153 dispensers. The dog bag dispensers will replace current dispensers at:

- Springer Park
- Falcon Park
- Rover's Run and Hound Hill dog off-leash areas
- Marcy Trail, Big Dry Creek Trail and East Big Dry Creek Trail systems

Metro District staff will initially stock the dispensers with bags employees have gathered to kick off the trial period. Each dispenser holds roughly 70 bags. Replenishing dispensers will be dependent on dog owners and residents replacing what they take. If the program is successful, the Metro District will expand the new program in other parks and open space areas in early 2010.

For more information about the dog bag dispenser program including specific locations where they will be installed during the initial trial period and what they will look like, visit [www.highlandsranch.org](http://www.highlandsranch.org). To provide feedback, contact Nick Adamson at [nadamson@highlandsranch.org](mailto:nadamson@highlandsranch.org) or 720-240-5917.

*Founded in 1981 as the local government in Highlands Ranch, Colorado, the Metro District provides a variety of municipal services to this planned community of 93,000 people. Learn more about the Metro District at [www.highlandsranch.org](http://www.highlandsranch.org).*

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