

New Research Shows Having a Pet is Hairy Situation

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But Some Let Fur Fly Because Love Outweighs Cleanup Concerns

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Sept. 1 /PRNewswire/ -- American homes are covered in pet hair, and pet parents are purrfectly content with that, according to a new survey released today by BISSELL Homecare, Inc. Across the country, cat and dog owners are finding fur in plenty of places, which is not surprising given that half (50 percent) of owners give their pets the run of the house, allowing cats and dogs on any furniture, all the time.

Some let the fur fly as the price of unconditional love: nearly six in 10 (57 percent) pet owners say their four-legged companions are more likely than a significant other to give them a kiss as soon as they walk in the door, and more than four in five (86 percent) don't mind their home being less pristine or having to work harder to keep their place clean because they have a cat or dog. But others let cleanup qualms get in the way of having a pet: almost two in five (38 percent) Americans, whether they currently own a pet or not, would add a pet to their home if cleaning up after them were an easy job.

"This research quantifies how much Americans love their pets," says pet lifestyle expert Kristen Levine. "Unfortunately, the research also reiterates that although pet clean-up doesn't detract from the relationship between pet and owner, it can be a major factor in deterring would-be pet parents from adopting. Imagine how many animals could find happy homes if people understood how simple, quick and cost-effective clean-up can be!"

Flipping Over Couch Cushions

Pet hair tops the list of most difficult pet messes to rid from the home (beating potty mishaps and vomit stains), and more than three in five (62 percent) Americans with a cat or dog would give up a small luxury, like their favorite morning beverage or cell phone service for a month, for their pet never to shed again. What's more, nearly three-quarters (73 percent) would like a magic wand to either remove pet stains from their carpet or pet hair or odor from their homes.

So what are Americans doing to address their frustrations? About half (51 percent) of dog and cat owners admit to using a "quick fix" like an air freshener or candle to hide odors, throwing away a rug the pet had an accident on instead of trying to clean it, or flipping over couch or chair cushions to hide fur.

A Better Approach

Levine has some saner solutions and has teamed up with BISSELL to educate Americans about how simple pet clean-up can be. Some tips:

- Brush your cat or dog regularly to keep shedding to a minimum. Dogs can be trimmed during summer months, when they tend to shed more, but don't trim the hair too short or your pet could get sunburned. To tackle pet hair in the home, try the Pet Hair Eraser(R) Vacuum

(\$169.99), which provides superior suction and specially designed brushes for removing pet hair, pet dander and dirt from carpets, upholstery and more. Or for quick clean up; try the Pet Hair Broom (\$24.99) with adjustable rubber bristles that attract pet hair like a magnet.

-- Attend to potty accidents pronto, especially if you have a cat because cat urine is actually more concentrated - and likely to stain - than dog urine. Absorb as much of the moisture as possible with old towels - being careful to blot instead of rub - before applying a carpet solution. If accidents are common, consider purchasing a SpotBot(R) Pet (\$139.99), which is a compact, portable carpet deep cleaner that gives pet owners the freedom to walk away from messes while it does all the work.

-- To minimize tracked dirt, quickly rub down dogs with a towel after walks, making sure to include their paws. This step is especially important for rainy days when mud, water and who-knows-what-else easily clings to fur. For those times when mud somehow ends up in the house anyway, look for the new foaming Pet Carpet & Upholstery Cleaner (\$5.49) from BISSELL's upcoming Pet Inspired(TM) line.

To check out a full line of products for pet lovers and to review BISSELL's new research, which examines the roles pets play in home culture as well as how Americans feel about pet adoption, visit www.bissell.com. BISSELL is a Petfinder.com partner and generously supports other causes to help protect dogs, cats and other pets nationwide.

***Methodological Notes**

The research was conducted by Kelton Research between May 21st and May 27th, 2009 using an e-mail invitation and an online survey. Quotas are set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and over. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.