PET WASTE RECOVERY, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL APPARATUS

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ABSTRACT

A pet waste recovery and disposal apparatus, including a reusable soft-sided container in the general construction of a sleeve, having a closable top and a closable bottom adapted to receive a disposable bag therein, said disposable bag, in a preferred embodiment, having a closure means, such as a drawstring to close the top of the bag. A further embodiment of the invention includes the reusable soft-sided container in combination with the disposable bag having a drawstring closure means, the reusable soft-sided container having a second aperture through which the ends of the drawstrings of the disposable bag are threaded, the disposable bag having its inside surface outwardly exposed when the reusable soft-sided container is in the right side out position and the disposable bag being in the interior of the reusable soft-sided container when in the reusable soft sided container is in the wrong side out position. The reusable soft-sided container is washable and stylish and has, on an outside portion thereof, a pocket adapted to receive at least one unused disposable bag.
PET WASTE RECOVERY, STORAGE AND DISPOSAL APPARATUS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a portable container for recovering, storing and disposing of wastes, particularly pet or animal waste.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] It is known for pet owners to collect their pet's waste in disposable bags and to dispose of the bags at an appropriate location. This is normally done as soon as possible for hygiene and comfort reasons. Some public places are provided with waste bins specifically designated for pet or animal waste. However, many public places do not have designated waste bins or any form of waste bin. Owners who collect their pet's waste in a disposable bag have to carry the disposable bag until the waste can be disposed of in a waste bin. This is inconvenient and unhygienic. Further, many pet owners find the experience of collecting waste to be unpleasant due to the sensory experience attendant to collecting semi-solid waste using only a thin film disposable bag. As a result, frequently, owners do not collect their pet's waste. Failure to collect pet waste is illegal in many public places.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention comprises a pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus. An exemplary embodiment of the present invention includes a reusable soft-sided container in the general construction of a sleeve, having a closable top and a closable bottom, as more fully described herein, adapted to receive a disposable bag therein, said disposable bag, in a preferred embodiment, having a closure means, such as a drawstring to close the top of the bag. A further embodiment of the invention includes the reusable soft-sided container in combination with the disposable bag that is positioned, when in use, in the interior of the reusable soft-sided container. The reusable soft-sided container is washable and stylish and has, on an outside portion thereof, a pocket adapted to receive at least one unused disposable bag and a leash attachment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] For a better understanding of the present invention including the features, advantages and specific embodiments, reference is made to the following detailed description along with accompanying drawings in which:

[0005] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the front of the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention, showing the pocket for holding unused disposable bags;

[0006] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention in the right side out position;

[0007] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the back of the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention in the wrong side out position with the top open;

[0008] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention in the right side out position in operation showing the disposable bag in the inside out position;

[0009] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention in the right side out position in operation with the waste being retrieved into the interior of the disposable bag;

[0010] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the front of the present invention in the wrong side out position with the drawstring of the reusable soft-sided container and the disposable bag closed; and

[0011] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the present invention showing the disposable bag being released from the reusable soft-sided container of the present invention.

[0012] References in the detailed description correspond to like references in the Figures unless otherwise noted. Like numerals refer to like parts throughout the various Figures.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0013] While the making and using of the preferred embodiment of the present invention is discussed in detail below, it should be appreciated that the present invention provides many applicable inventive concepts which can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. Some features of the preferred embodiment shown and described may be simplified or exaggerated for illustrating the principles of the invention.

[0014] The present invention comprises a pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus. An exemplary embodiment of the present invention includes a reusable soft-sided container in the general construction of a sleeve, having a closable top and a closable bottom, as more fully described herein, adapted to receive a disposable bag therein, the disposable bag, in a preferred embodiment, having a closure means, such as a drawstring to close the top of the bag. A further embodiment of the invention includes the reusable soft-sided container in combination with the disposable bag that is positioned, when in use, in the interior of the reusable soft-sided container.

[0015] Reference is now made to the different views of the present invention 100 of FIGS. 1, 2 and 3. FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the front of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the wrong side out position, showing the pocket 105 on the wrong side surface of the front panel 101A for holding at least one unused disposable bag 108. Leash attachment 102 and drawstring 103 are located proximate the top edge of reusable soft-sided container 101. Leash attachment 102 is coupled to the right (as in correct) side surface of back panel 101C of the reusable soft-sided container, preferably with a snap mechanism 106. The snap mechanism is about 7/32" in size.

[0016] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the right (as in correct) side out position, exposing in this view, the right side surface of the front panel 101B and wrong side surface of back panel 101D of the reusable soft-sided container 101. FIG. 2 represents the starting position of the reusable soft-sided container 101 when it is to be used. The reusable soft-sided container 101 must be in this position, with flap 301 closed, on the interior of the reusable soft-sided container 101, in order to install disposable bag 203, and thereafter to retrieve the waste.

[0017] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the back of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the wrong side out position with the top open and illustrating the wrong side surface of the back panel 101D and the right side surface of the front panel 100B. As more fully described herein, flap 301 and flap tab 302 are adapted to close the bottom portion of reusable soft-sided container 101.

[0018] The reusable soft-sided container is washable and stylish and, as seen in FIG. 1, has, on the front outside panel thereof, a pocket 105 adapted to receive at least one unused disposable bag 108. The reusable soft-sided container 101 is
preferably made of a plurality of layered panels having outer and inner surfaces 101A, 101B and 101C and 101D, respectively, of nylon weave, or similar resilient fabric, having a closure means at the top, such as a drawstring 103 and a flap 301 (seen in FIG. 3) at the bottom thereof. The flap 301 is adapted, when folded across the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container 101, to cover the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container 101. The flap 301 having a fastening means 701 (seen in FIG. 7) adapted to couple it to the back outside panel 101D of the reusable soft-sided container such as hook and loop, Velcro closure, hole and button or zipper and the like. There is a flap tab 302 attached to the flap 301 for facilitating the opening of the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container 101 so as to release the disposable bag 203 from the interior of the reusable soft-sided container 101.

An attachment means 106, such as a snap mechanism or button, located proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container 101 is adapted to accept a leash attachment 102. The reusable soft-sided container 101 is advantageously constructed so that the warmth and texture of the waste is greatly attenuated when the user is retrieving it, and so that the smell of the waste is substantially contained in the enclosed reusable soft-sided container 101 while it is being carried. To use the present invention, disposable bag 203 is placed into the interior of the reusable soft-sided container 101. The drawstring 401 of the disposable bag 203 is pulled through an aperture 104, preferably being a button hole, in the reusable soft-sided container 101. The aperture 104 being located approximately halfway across the front panel of the reusable soft-sided container and between the top edge and bottom edge of the front panel 101A, 101B of the reusable soft-sided container 101.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the right side out position in operation showing the disposable bag in the inside out position, illustrating the position of the inner surface 203A of the disposable bag 203 having drawstring 401. When waste is to be retrieved, the end of the reusable soft sided container 101 that is closed by flap 301, is pushed up inside of the reusable soft sided container 101 to form a pocket to accept the closed end of disposable bag 203. Referring back to FIG. 2, seam labeled 204 contributes to reforming the reusable soft-sided container 101 to accept the disposable bag 203, when the reusable container is in the closed position. It is noted that with respect to FIG. 4, if the disposable bag is removed, the length of the reusable soft sided container is about 0.72 of the length shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. This is because the "missing" portion of the reusable soft sided container 101 is folded up inside of the reusable soft sided container 101. In this manner, a portion of the surface of the interior of the disposable bag 203A is outwardly exposed. Referring to FIG. 4, to retrieve the waste, the user places their hand into the top opening of reusable soft-sided container 101, such that their hand is in contact with the folded, inwardly exposed surfaces 101A, 101D of the reusable soft-sided container 101. The user then places the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container 101, lined with the disposable bag 203, on top of the waste, as seen in FIG. 4. As can also be seen, leash attachment 102 can be used to secure the present invention to a pet leash.

The user can then retrieve the waste. FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the right side out position with the waste being retrieved into the interior of the disposable bag 203. In this view, it can be seen that the disposable bag drawstring 401 has been pulled through button hole 401 of the reusable soft-sided container 101. As seen therein, the waste is in contact with the surface of the outwardly exposed, interior surface 203A of the disposable bag 203. The feel of the waste is attenuated due to a thickness of layers of the panels comprising the reusable soft-sided container 101 being between the user’s hand and the waste.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the front of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention in the outside out position with the drawstring 103 of the reusable soft-sided container and the drawstring 401 of the disposable bag closed. As seen in FIG. 6, once the waste has been collected, the user turns the reusable soft-sided container 101 wrong side out and right side in, thereby returning the interior surface 203B of the disposable bag 203 inward. The user can then pull the drawstring 401 on the disposable bag 203 which has been pulled through the aperture 104 and the drawstring 103 proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container 101, so as to close the disposable bag and the reusable soft-sided container 101.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention showing the flap 301 being released from its fasteners 701 and disposable bag 203 being released from the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention for disposal. As seen in FIG. 7, to release waste, the user pulls the tab 302 on the flap 301 while holding the present invention over a waste receptacle. The interior dimensions of the present invention are such that the disposable bag 203 is easily separable from the reusable soft-sided container 101. As can be seen, the user is not exposed to the disposable bag 203 that holds the waste after the waste is retrieved. The reusable soft-sided container 101 can be easily attached onto a leash.

To better understand the unique features and functionality of the present invention, a description of the construction of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention is provided. An exemplary embodiment of the present invention is constructed of a 1.9 ounce nylon rip stop fabric, 1/8” width nylon cording, 1/4” diameter Velcro® closures, and a one snap closure (size 4 with about a 1/5” diameter). To ensure smooth operation of the positioning of the disposable bag 203 in the reusable soft-sided container 101 and the release of the disposable bag 203 from the reusable soft-sided container 101, preferably, the fabric is initially dimensioned approximately as follows: a 25”x9½” piece for the front panel 101A, 101B of the reusable soft-sided container 101 (which panel portion includes the flap 301 portion) and 17½”x9½” for back panel 101C, 101D of the reusable soft-sided container 101. The fabric of the leash attachment 102 is initially dimensioned approximately 7” by 2”. The drawstring 103 of the reusable soft-sided container 101 is about 26” and the flap tab 302 is about 3”.

To construct the front panel 101A, 101B, the top and bottom edges thereof are turned in and coupled, such as sewn, about ¼”. The sides of the front panel 101A, 101B are turned in about 2” toward the center at the top and tapered to about ¼” seam at the bottom of the front panel 101A, 101B such that the unfinished front panel 101A, 101B measures about 7 1/6” at the top tapering down at an angle, to about 9” across at the bottom with the length of the unfinished front panel 101A, 101B measuring about 24 1/6”. The seams prevent the fabric from fraying and provides stability and form to the reusable soft-sided container 101. A 1” aperture 201, comprising a button hole for the drawstring of the reusable soft-sided container 101 is made about ½” from the bottom, in the center. Another 1” aperture 104, also comprising a button hole is made about 3½” directly above the first buttonhole for the drawstring 401 of the disposable bag 203.
Next, the tapered top is folded over 9° and the edge coupled, e.g., sewn, closest to the second aperture 104 comprising a buttonhole. The left and right side edges should not be sewn down as this portion will constitute the pocket 105 for the at least one unused disposable bag 108 (as seen in FIG. 1). The fold also adds a layer of fabric to the front panel 101A, 101B so as to attenuate the feel of the waste. The additional layer of the panel 101A, 101B further is adapted to create the stiffness needed to form the reusable soft-sided container 101 for receiving the disposable bag 203 without sacrificing one-handed functionality of the present invention.

Next, the left corner of the top edge of the front panel 101A, 101B which is thusly formed is folded over approx. 1° and then again ½°. This ½° fold is formed twice and then coupled, e.g., sewn. This fold and coupled, e.g., sewn procedure is then repeated with the right corner. Next, the top edge of the front panel 101A, 101B is folded down ½° twice and coupled, e.g., sewn. The coupling could be performed with a contrasting color of thread to create a stylish look in the finished product. With regard to functionality, this construction creates stability for the closed end of the reusable soft-sided container 101.

Flap tab 302, as seen in FIG. 3, is made with a 3° piece of cording by sewing it onto the edge proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container 101, in the center of the front panel 101B. The loop should stand up about 1 inch away from the edge of the top of the back panel 101C, 101D. This loop arrangement enables the end to be opened with one hand when disposing of the waste.

With regard to the back panel 101C, 101D, a ¼° hem is made all of the way around the back panel fabric. This prevents the fabric from fraying as well as creating stability for the reusable soft-sided container. The top 6° of fabric is folded down and sewn on the bottom edge. This fold adds a layer of fabric, which contributes to the ability of the reusable soft-sided container 101 of the present invention to attenuate the feel of the waste. The additional layer also helps to form the reusable soft-sided container 101 for the disposable bag 203. The back panel 101C, 101D should measure about 11° in length and 9° in width.

To assemble the back panel 101C, 101D and front panel 101A, 101B of the reusable soft-sided container 101, the right sides of fabric 101B, 101C are brought together, and the bottom edges of the front panel 101A, 101B and back panel 101C, 101D aligned so that they are even and only the sides of the back panel 101C, 101D and front panel 101A, 101B coupled, e.g., sewn together. This construction results in the basic form of the reusable soft-sided container 101, with the top and bottom open.

The reusable soft-sided container 101 should then be turned right side out and coupled, e.g., sewn sides against, for example, using French seams on both sides. These seams are then folded toward the center of the back panel 101C and the outside edges of the seam fastened (e.g., sewn) down. This could also be performed with a contrasting color of thread to create a designer look in a finished product. The seams enable the reusable soft-sided container 101 to maintain its shape without hampering its ability to be turned inside out with one hand.

Next, the drawstring casing 107 (as seen in FIG. 1) is made by folding the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container 101 over ½° and coupling (e.g., sewing) all of the way around, making sure the aperture 201, e.g., buttonhole, is in the fold of the casing 107. This could be performed with a contrasting color of thread to create a designer look in a finished product. The drawstring 103 is then inserted through aperture 201, e.g., buttonhole, and pulled through the casing 107 and the ends of the cords knotted with knot 109 to prevent the drawstring 103 from pulling out of the casing 107.

Three inches (3°) of the front panel 101A, 101B, comprising flap 301, which has the 3° tapered, coupled, e.g., sewn edges, are then folded over towards the back of reusable soft-sided container 101. Taking care not to sew the front and back pieces together, a ½° seam is made on the fold, use the contrasting thread color for appearances. This seam is adapted to cause the flap 301 of the reusable soft-sided container 101 to close in the correct position.

Fasteners 701, such as three ¼° circular, Velcro™ fasteners as seen in FIG. 7, can then be fastened to the under side of the edges of this flap 301. For example, the first fastener can be placed in the center edge and the other two about an inch away on either side on the wrong side out surface of the back panel 101D of the reusable soft-sided container 101. The front panel 101A, 101B of the reusable soft-sided container 101 is folded over and the corresponding Velcro™ fasteners attached to the right side out surface of the front panel 101B.

The reusable soft-sided container 101 is then turned right side out. About 8 inches down from the drawstring edge, the top of the reusable soft-sided container is folded inward. A ½° seam 204 is then made all of the way around this fold using contrasting colored thread. This seam helps form the reusable soft-sided container 101 for the disposable bag 203, when the reusable soft-sided container 101 is in the closed position. It also maintains the form for the reusable soft-sided container 101 and provides the stiffness necessary to open the reusable soft-sided container 101 and retrieve the waste.

The leash attachment, 102, is made as follows: The 7°x2° piece of fabric is folded in half in a vertical direction and then sewn closed at the top and side. Turn this inside out and fold the opening over approximately ½° and sew. One edge of this attachment is then sewn to the drawing side of 101D. The attachment preferably is located in the center, just above the drawstring casing. A snap closure can then be coupled to each end of the leash attachment.

The disposable bag 203 is made to be flexible. The disposable bag 203 may be formed of plastics, for instance polyethylene, having a drawstring 301 proximate the top edge of the disposable bag 203. The general dimensions of an exemplary disposable bag are about 8/4° wide by about 10° long. An unused disposable bag 203 may be removed from the pocket 105 by pulling the bag through the opening.

The reusable soft-sided container 101 according to the present invention has the advantage that it provides a closable soft-sided container for the collection, storage and disposal of pet waste. By having layers of panels, a pet owner does not have to experience the unpleasant sensory feeling of collecting the waste.

To those skilled in the art to which this invention relates, many changes in construction and widely differing embodiments and applications of the invention will suggest themselves without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims. The disclosures and the descriptions herein are purely illustrative and are not intended to be in any sense limiting.

What is claimed is:

1. A pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus, comprising:
   a reusable soft-sided container in the general construction of a sleeve, having a closure means adapted to close the top thereof and a closure means adapted to close the bottom thereof, the reusable soft-sided container adapted to receive a disposable bag therein.
2. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 1, wherein the reusable soft-sided container is constructed of a front panel including at least one layer of a resilient fabric and a back panel including at least one layer of a resilient fabric, the front panel being coupled to the back panel along their respective side edges, the front panel and back panel having a tapered shape along a portion of their side edges.

3. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 2, wherein the closure means proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container comprises an enclosed casing having a drawstring there through and a first aperture through which the ends of the drawstring are pulled.

4. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 2, wherein the closure means proximate the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container comprises a flap adapted to be fastened with fastening means to the outer surface of the back panel of the reusable soft-sided container.

5. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 2, in combination with a disposable bag having a drawstring closure means, the reusable soft-sided container having a second aperture through which the ends of the drawstrings of the disposable bag are threaded there through.

6. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 5, wherein the first aperture and second aperture comprise button holes.

7. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 6, adapted to be turned right side out to collect waste, and once the waste is retrieved, turned wrong side out to contain the waste within the disposable bag, within the reusable soft-sided container.

8. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 7, the disposable bag being closable via a drawstring mechanism and being positioned, when having been used, in the interior of the reusable soft-sided container.

9. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 2, the front panel and back panel of the reusable soft-sided container being made of nylon rip stop fabric.

10. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a pocket for holding unused disposable bags, the pocket being located on a wrong side surface of the reusable soft-sided container.

11. The pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus of claim 10, further comprising a leash attachment means coupled proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container.

12. An apparatus for recovering pet waste, comprising a reusable soft-sided container in the form of a sleeve, having a closable top end and closable bottom end, the reusable soft-sided container adapted to receive in the interior thereof, a disposable bag.

13. The apparatus of claim 12, in combination with a disposable bag.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, further including a drawstring closure means proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container, a flap closure means proximate the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container, and a drawstring closure means proximate the top of the disposable bag.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the flap closure means comprises a hook and loop fastening means.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, adapted to be turned right side out to receive animal waste and wrong side out to contain the animal waste within the interior of the disposable bag contained with the reusable soft-sided container.

17. The apparatus of claim 16, further including a leash attachment means having coupling means to couple the leash attachment to the reusable soft-sided container.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, reusable soft-sided container being constructed of a front panel and a back panel, each such panel being constructed of a plurality of layers of nylon rip stop fabric.

19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the reusable soft-sided container has an open diameter around the top edge thereof and around the bottom edge thereof, and the disposable bag has an open diameter around the open top edge.

20. A pet waste recovery, storage and disposal apparatus, comprising:

- a reusable soft-sided container in the general construction of a sleeve, having a closure means proximate the top thereof and a closure means proximate the bottom thereof, the reusable soft-sided container adapted to receive a disposable bag therein, the reusable soft-sided container being constructed of a front panel comprised of at least one layer of fabric coupled along the side edges to a back panel comprised of at least one layer of a fabric;

- the closure means proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container comprising an enclosed casing having a drawstring there through and a first aperture through which the ends of the drawstring are pulled;

- a disposable bag having a drawstring closure means, the reusable soft-sided container having a second aperture through which the ends of the drawstrings of the disposable bag are threaded, the disposable bag having its inside surface outwardly exposed when the reusable soft-sided container is in the right side out position and the disposable bag being in the interior of the reusable soft-sided container when in the reusable soft sided container is in the wrong side out position;

- the closure means proximate the bottom of the reusable soft-sided container comprising a flap adapted to be fastened with fastening means to the wrong side out surface of the back panel of the reusable soft-sided container;

- a pocket for holding unused disposable bags, being located on the wrong side out surface of the reusable soft sided container; and

- a leash attachment means coupled proximate the top of the reusable soft-sided container.

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