

Poo Patrol ready to pick up doggie dung

By Michael Carayannis

THE messes and smells can turn some people away from owning a dog, but now your pet's business has become Poo Patrol's business.

Two months ago, avid dog owner Michelle Lang became so frustrated with picking up the dung of her four dogs that she knew other people must have felt the same way.

"When it was my turn to pick up the poo in the yard I would dread it," Ms Lang said.

"I would wish there was someone I could pay to do it. I couldn't find anyone in Sydney to do it and if I had I would have called them to clean up my yard."

The Sutherland Shire-based Poo Patrol will come to your yard with a pet waste vacuum (or a Poover as they like to call it), a shovel and treats for your pet.

"We pay people to do all sorts of things for us these days," Ms Lang said.

"Living in such a fast-paced world, I'm sure people have better things to do than clean up after their dog.

"The dogs might bark at you from the end of the yard when the vacuum is going, but with dangerous dog breeds we like to have the owner at home."

The dung is placed into a business waste bin



No mess: The Poo Patrol team will come to your home and clean up your dog's dung.

Picture: Jane Dyson

and taken to the rubbish tip.

Ms Lang and four Poo Patrol members will travel Sydney-wide, with the service starting from \$10.

Details: 0406 139 833.



Poo patrol

Michelle's business is doggie business

Bending down to shovel up the business my four boxers left, I sighed. It was 1996 and every Saturday I devoted a lot of time to picking up their poo.

"I'd pay someone to do this for me," I grumbled. Surely other people hated picking up their pooch's poo as much as I did?

Time passed and I had two kids, Tate and Summer. It wasn't until April 2008 that I thought about my idea again. Searching on the internet, I was amazed that "poo clearing" was huge in America.

"Why don't I start doing it here in Sydney?" I said to my hubby, Anthony, 38. He thought it was a great idea, as I'd become bored by my job as a dental technician.

Doing some research, I constructed what I call a "poover" which is a manure vacuum cleaner.

Anthony helped me buy a trailer that looks like a kennel and I set up a website.

In May 2008, I launched

Poo Patrol. My first job was for a woman who had four golden retrievers. There was so much poo the "Poover" ran out of petrol!

"That was awful," I said to Anthony afterwards. "I was gagging the whole time."

"They won't all be like that," he soothed.

Thankfully, he was right. Before I knew it I had hundreds of clients.

My son Tate, 14, thought it was hysterical when I picked him up from school in my Poo Patrol van. My daughter Summer, three, is too young to understand what her mummy does.

I'm a one-woman operation but, in the

summer, when people use their yards more, I get two casual staff helping me.

I have at least 100 clients a week all over Sydney, including blind people and people in wheelchairs.

My job sounds gross but I've had dogs all my life and I've had children and dealt with nappies.

The poo I collect is double-bagged and taken to commercial waste bins. I fill about 250 bags a week. Charging from \$10 per yard, my business turns over between \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year. Not bad for a pile of you know what!

Michelle Lang, 36, Gymea, NSW.

Dirty work but she loves it

By **Amanda Keane**

MICHELLE Lang's job is poo – literally.

Mrs Lang is the owner of Poo Patrol – Sydney's first pet waste removal service.

Her daily routine involves removing dog poo from dog owners' backyards – and she couldn't be happier.

"I really enjoy it and I am outdoors everyday. I get to play with the dogs, meet different people and I am having so much fun with Poo Patrol," Mrs Lang said.

The idea started 12 months ago where Mrs Lang was a dental ceramic technician.

"I had four boxers and every Saturday I used to go out and shovel the poo and thought, I wonder if there was someone who would come and do this – the idea developed from there," she said.

"Then I wanted to know if there were any poooper scoopers around and I found there weren't. There definitely weren't any in NSW so I thought, I could actually be that person to go around and do this."

After much research and planning, Mrs Lang got her first client.

"I purchased an Australian-made vacuum [cleaner] that I use to suck up the poo and I started doing plenty of marketing and it took off from there," she said.

"My customers range from busy working families with no children, to families who have children, who don't want to pick up the poo anymore."

Her technical background came in



Nose for business: Michelle Lang loves her job as the owner of Poo Patrol.

handy – she built her own trailer (complete with fake dog poo) and she has made a second vacuum, called the Mini Poover, made from a wheelie bin.

"I have thousands of parts lying around in my garage – it drives my husband crazy – but I love work-

ing away testing out new ideas." Poo Patrol is a weekly service for the Hills District and beyond.

Although she admits to "nearly gagging" at her very first job, Mrs Lang has never looked back.

"I am so glad I have started this up. The idea has been with me for a

really long time and I am finally doing it," she said.

So where does all that poo end up? It gets emptied into doubled bio-degradable waste bags where it is deposited at the dump.

Details: www.poopatrol.com.au or call 1800 364 766.

Picture: Natalie Roberts

Much bigger role urged for women

By **Jessica Mahar** in State Parliament

WOMEN will be encouraged to take a bigger role in local government with a new committee to advise on ways to get more women in senior and elected positions.

In Baulkham Hills, of 12 councillors, only two are female.

Not one council in western Sydney has an equal ratio of male to female councillors, and of 12 councils, there is only one female mayor and one female deputy mayor.

Local Government Minister Barbara Perry said the advisory committee would talk with the State Government about how to encourage more women into local councils.

"It is important we encourage more women into the local government arena to ensure a diverse range of views that reflect the complexity of our community," Ms Perry said.

Representatives of key groups are on the new committee including the Australian Local Government Women's Association, the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, and Local Government Managers Australia (NSW).

The Minister for Women, Verity Firth, said the new council would bolster the already intelligent and valuable contributions women are making to local government.

"I don't think the current percentage of female mayors in the state is reflective enough of the important leadership role women play in the community more generally," she said.