

Energy companies turn to animal poo for clean power

October 28 2019, by Sam Kingsley



Dog trainer Marianne Mayer has welcomed the dog poo-to-energy drive

In the search for clean electricity, power companies in Finland are going green by way of brown, and have set their sights on a previously untapped energy source: animal dung.

During this month's FEI World Cup showjumping qualifier at Helsinki International Horse Show, 100 tonnes of manure was loaded up and wheelbarrowed into two large containers before being carted away for incineration at the Järvenpää [power](#) plant.

The 150 megawatts of [energy](#) generated is enough to power the whole four-day show, with some left over to heat homes in the Finnish capital, according to energy company Fortum which launched its "Horse Power" initiative five years ago.

"There are so many horses in Finland and of course many more around the world, so it would be amazing if we could turn all that poo into energy," Fortum's Krista Hellgren told AFP.

The company claims that the manure produced daily by two horses can generate heat for a single family home for a year.

And just 200 millilitres' worth is enough to charge a phone.

Meanwhile, another power company has called for the public to send them their pets' doings.

Vantaan Energia's sticker and online campaign implores [dog owners](#) to "give poo a new life" by simply throwing it in the bin, from where it follows everyday refuse to a huge waste-to-energy incineration plant.



Vantaan Energia urges dog owners to throw dog poo in the bin, from where it follows everyday refuse to a huge waste-to-energy incineration plant

"It's not nice to step on it, it's much nicer to burn it and use it as a fuel for electricity and heat," the firm's production director Kalle Patomeri told AFP.

Though dog poo is still a tiny fraction of the 1,000 tonnes of household rubbish burnt every day, Patomeri says it helps produce efficient energy with limited emissions and leftover waste products.

As a result, Vantaan Energia hopes to be coal-free within just over two years.



Dog poo is still a tiny fraction of the 1,000 tonnes of household rubbish that Vantaan Energia incinerates every day

The dung-to-energy drive has been welcomed by dog trainer Marianne Mayer who actively supports the cause. She says the 50 dogs on her client list produce "quite a lot" of poo every week, which may otherwise have been left on the [forest floor](#) or thrown into bio waste.

"Finally someone's doing something concrete about it, so you know it's going to be energy," she told AFP. "Since we need to have other energy than fossils, it's going to be really positive."

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