



Daisye Suduran of The Spa at the Ritz Carlton holds a "hair boom" in New Orleans, Louisiana, May 8, 2010.

(Photo: PAUL BUCK/epa/Corbis)

## Hair Helps Out

Dog hair soaks up the oil

By Nick Berray | August 2, 2010



What's the best way to clean up a huge oil spill? That question has a multitude of answers, but one of the most interesting solutions has come from the Matter of Trust organization.

Run by Lisa Gautier, Matter of Trust collects massive amounts of hair to use in oil-spill clean-ups. In fact, as of July 2010, 19 warehouses in the Gulf of Mexico region were filled to the brim with hair!

The idea to use hair to help soak up oil spills came about in 1989 when the Exxon Valdez ship dumped thousands of gallons of oil off the Alaskan coastline. Alabama hairstylist Phil McCroy was watching news coverage of the crisis. He thought about why humans wash their hair: because it collects oil!

That thought lead McCroy to invent the hair boom, a long round snake-like object that floats on the water and absorbs great amounts of oil. Gautier's organization began producing hair booms in 1998. With more than 2,600 oil spills around the world each year, hair booms are in demand year-round and worldwide.

A Matter of Trust operates out of San Francisco, but donations of hair come in from all over the United States, and even from other countries! The organization has received so much hair that 20,000 booms have already been constructed for use in the Gulf. In fact, the organization has had to temporarily halt donations to the Gulf due to an overload.

Humans are not the only ones who can donate hair to help out. Hair has been collected from llamas, sheep, and even dogs.

The "Dog A Do" pet salon in Herndon, Virginia, has been donating hair since the spill began.

"It's a great cause and a good use of hair that would otherwise be thrown away," owner Kat Brooks told the Scholastic Kids Press Corps.

According to Brooks, dog hair is extremely porous—finer and softer than human hair. Bichon Frises, poodles, and Wheaten Terriers all have soft coats ideal for making booms. She estimated that her dog salon grooms between 30 to 60 dogs per day, and collects roughly 18 to 20 pounds of hair every day.

"I will keep donating until nobody wants it anymore," Brooks said when asked how long she planned on collecting hair.

For more information on hair booms visit the Matter of Trust website.

## GULF OIL SPILL RECOVERY SPECIAL REPORT

Kid Reporters investigate how the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is being cleaned up and how the spill has impacted the people, animals, and environment of the Gulf coast. Their reports -- along with other useful resources -- can be found in the Gulf Oil Spill Recovery Special Report.

## NEWS FOR KIDS, BY KIDS

Get the latest on national and international events, movies, television, music, sports, and more from the Scholastic Kids Press Corps.

## School to Home

Reading Club (Book Clubs)  
Book Fairs

## Teacher Resources

Book Lists  
Book Wizard  
*Instructor* Magazine  
Lesson Plans  
New Books  
New Teachers  
Scholastic News Online  
Strategies and Ideas  
Student Activities  
Daily Teacher Blogs  
Videos  
Whiteboard Resources

## Products & Services

Author Visit Program  
Classroom Books  
Classroom Magazines  
Find a Sales Representative  
Free Programs and Giveaways  
Guided Reading  
Product Information  
Reading is Fundamental  
Request a Catalog  
Scholastic Professional

## Online Shopping

Printables  
Teacher Express  
Teacher Store



Sign up today for free teaching ideas, lesson plans, online activities, tips for your classroom, and much more.




[See a sample >](#)

## Join Us Online



**PRIVACY POLICY** · [Terms of Use](#) · TM ® & © 2016 Scholastic Inc. All Rights Reserved.