Packaging Human Waste
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On long cave trips, it is essential to carry secure containers for urine and solid waste. Expedition cavers have devised systems to securely package human waste so it can be carried out of the cave.

This chapter gives instructions for a tried-and-true burrito kit that can be rolled up and tucked in the pack. The system is handy for unexpected emergencies as well as multi-day expeditions.

Pee Bottles
Cavers should carry a container for urine on every trip. Even in cave passages that periodically flood and wash out, packing out all human waste is increasingly important. (See human waste, pages 35, 71, 125, and 276.)

Boldly mark the designated pee bottle and use a different shape than your drinking bottle—it's dark in there, and it's not fun to accidentally raise the wrong one to your lips. Make sure the lid provides a secure, leakproof fit.

Believe it or not, the flexible Platypus® bottles are quite durable for use as expedition pee bottles and they withstand multiple trips. (You can also purchase little Platy patches that really do work for repairing pinholes.) Some cavers need a small funnel to use with the Platyp bottles.

Burrito Bags
This burrito wrapping has worked successfully in the field for over a decade and involves no foil, kitty litter, or granular chemicals. (Tiny bits of litter scatter and pieces of aluminum foil break off and disperse in the cave.) The protocol described here works equally well for caving, kayaking, climbing, or any other outdoor expedition. Make the light, compact packets ahead of time.

- **Turkey Baking/Basting Bag.** A medium-sized roasting bag or large turkey bag is best. It is strong and very light. This is by far the tough-est, most durable, odor containing, and leak-proof bag we’ve tried.

- **Cheap Paper Towels.** Paper towels are more substantial in cave humidity and provide better grip than toilet paper. The less expensive paper towels have less lint. (Lint irritates skin.) Extra paper towels come in handy for nose blowing.

- **Reynolds® Plastic Wrap.** Alternate squares of plastic wrap between layers of paper towel to avoid the problem of the plastic sticking to itself. Most cavers use two or three paper towels per burrito. Reynolds plastic wrap works best—other wraps have failed. The extra expense will secure your burrito and your travel comfort. Plus, Reynolds offers those nice, strong, camouflaging colors. (Other wraps are almost okay, but they get too sticky and rip too easily.)

- **Antibacterial Wipes.** Add individual foil packs of antibacterial towelettes to burrito rolls. Or, take several sheets from a plastic
container of wipes and repackage them in a separate zippie. The wipes are also handy for sponge bathing and hand cleaning. (Those with suspected sensitivity or allergy to antibacterial and antimicrobial agents should avoid these products.)

- **Freezer Zips.** Fold and place a small freezer Ziploc® on the layered stack of alternating paper towels and plastic wrap squares before rolling it all together for transport. Add gallon-sized zippies for compact packaging of all burritos at the end of multi-day expeditions. Additional zippies will secure the entire parcel for travel and proper disposal.

**Instructions**
Roll the above items into individual, ready-to-use “kits” for transport. Use one or more squares of Reynolds plastic wrap to hold the stacked items all together in a rolled burrito shape. For easy access, package several burrito kits together inside a quart-sized zippie. The following bullet points detail a secure wrapping procedure:

- Open the turkey bag and make it into a bowl shape at your squat spot.
- Try to avoid mixing urine with the fecal matter. This combination creates excess methane and your baggie will get gassy, which could make a risky travel scenario.
- To cut the odor, spread an antibacterial wipe over the top before rolling up the burrito. For personal hygiene, use a clean antibacterial wipe on hands when finished.
- When done, twist and tie multiple knots in the top of the baking bag. Be sure to get the air out.
- Gather the Reynolds plastic wrap around the whole bundle and secure it in a small freezer zippie.
- Several used burritos will stack together nicely in a quart-sized zippie freezer bag.
- For travel, wrap the stack in several more zippies for a compact, secure trek. Some like to use a small waterproof dry bag or a sturdy Nalgene® bottle for transport. Place the package in a well-padded position inside your pack.

At the end of the expedition, wrap the disposable packet with several more opaque plastic bags and properly discard. Do not leave it in the house or truck. Do not flush. Do not drop down port-a-potties. Do not put in open trash cans. Find a trash receptacle that will soon be emptied and carried away. On public lands where burritos are common practice, inquire about current disposal protocol.