

STORMWATER 101: HOW DOES ANIMAL AND PET WASTE CONTRIBUTE TO STORMWATER POLLUTION?

Stormwater runoff contaminated by animal wastes are high in nutrients and bacteria. This runoff entering waterways can increase contamination levels resulting in closure of recreational fishing and swimming areas. Many pet owners do not believe that their one animal could make much difference, but when the wastes from all the pets in a typical neighborhood are added together, the impact is significant.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

A simple solution to water pollution is picking up after your dog whether you are walking your dog in a park, down your neighborhood block or in your own backyard. When it rains, your pet's "business" is washed down into the street and storm drain and into the nearest waterway. This contaminates our rivers, lakes and streams with unhealthy levels of bacteria making them unsafe for recreation. Cleaning up after your dog may not be the most inviting activity, but it will help prevent water pollution. Think of it this way, picking up after a pet is similar to changing a baby's diapers. For pet owners, there are several options to keeping your pet's waste from being washed into rivers, lakes and streams. The most common options for pet owners include carrying a plastic grocery bag or one designed for pet waste pickup.



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