
What is grosser than picking up dog poop? Stepping in it! What is even grosser than that? Swimming in, fishing from or drinking water with dog poop in it.

 Cleaning up after your pet is good for both you and your local environment!

 Nutrients in pet waste can promote the growth of algae and aquatic plants in streams, rivers, ponds and lakes.

 Pet waste contains bacteria, parasites and viruses that can make swimming, boating or drinking unsafe.

 Pet waste left on the road, sidewalk or even in the woods can harm water quality and human health.



Important
Pet Waste
Information
Inside

Pet Waste, Water Quality & Your Health

Pet Waste is...

POLLUTION!

Uncollected pet waste can end up in nearby water resources

AN ENVIRONMENTAL RISK!

Pet waste contains nutrients that can degrade water quality

A HEALTH RISK!

Microorganisms in pet waste can make people or pets sick



Prevent Water Pollution

Protect Your Health

Clean Up After Your Pet

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Pet Waste, Water Quality & Your Health: Why You Should Give a Bark



When rain or snow melt runs over the land it can carry pollutants like uncollected pet waste directly or by way of a storm drain into nearby streams, lakes, ponds or wetlands. This polluted stormwater runoff, also called *Nonpoint Source Pollution*, can degrade water quality, impair aquatic health, and make waters unsuitable for recreation.

Why is Pet Waste Pollution?

Pet waste is the source of two types of pollutants: pathogens and nutrients. *Pathogens* are disease causing microorganisms that can contaminate water resources, making them unsafe for swimming or drinking. *Nutrients*, such as nitrogen and phosphorous, can cause runaway growth of algae and aquatic weeds, making the water murky, green and smelly.

When the excess growth of algae and aquatic plants, or even the pet waste itself, decomposes in the water it uses up dissolved oxygen needed by fish to survive, and releases compounds such as ammonia that can harm aquatic life.

Why is Pet Waste a Health Risk?

Pathogenic bacteria, parasites and viruses in pet waste are a health risk to both people and animals. Leaving pet waste on the ground in your yard or in public areas may expose children, adults and even other pets to diseases. There is also a real risk of getting sick from drinking or swimming in waters contaminated by pet waste.

Is Your Pet the Problem?

It may seem that your pet does not have much of an impact, but consider all the other pets in your neighborhood, town, and even in the state. That is a lot of pets doing their daily business! Even if only a fraction of pet waste is not picked up it can really add up.

But isn't animal waste natural? It is, but in developed areas, where there are paved surfaces and lawns, pet waste can be carried by runoff directly into nearby water resources. In naturally vegetated areas pollutants from decomposing waste



can be captured by the underlying soils; however, in parks and open spaces popular with dog walkers, waste can build up, becoming a serious problem.

WHAT TO DO WITH PET POO

Always bring a plastic bag or two when you walk your dog.

Use the bag like a glove, scoop the poop, then turn the bag inside out and seal.

Put the bagged waste in a trash can or flush unbagged waste down the toilet.

Never throw dog waste down a storm drain. They lead directly to a water resource such as a stream, lake, pond or wetland.



To learn more, visit www.conservect.org/ctrivercoastal

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