

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS - THE RIGHT WAY

Pets may be humans' best friends, but their waste isn't. Nothing ruins a walk in the park or around the neighborhood more than an unpleasant surprise - and the same goes for our waterways.

Did you know that pet waste is one of the leading causes of pollution in urban waterways? These small piles can have a major environmental impact that many people overlook.

HOW DOES PET WASTE EFFECT OUR LOCAL WATERWAYS?

Pet waste contains harmful pathogens and bacteria, including:

- **E.coli, fecal coliforms, Giardia, and parasites**
 - **RESULT:** Spread of harmful illnesses or diseases among humans and animals

Pet waste also contains dangerous amounts of nutrients, including:

- **Phosphorus and nitrogen**
 - **RESULT:** Algae blooms that elevate oxygen levels, killing plant and aquatic life

All these factors make water uninhabitable and unsafe for human recreation, such as swimming, boating, and fishing.

HOW DOES PET WASTE ENTER OUR WATERWAYS?

There are a few simple actions we can take to reduce the issue of pet waste in our waterways, and one of those is understanding how it enters our streams, rivers, and lakes. When pet waste is left on lawns, streets, and roadways, it can be swept away by stormwater and deposited directly into local waterways. Even when bagged, pet waste can still enter the waterways if the bag isn't tied securely.



PROPER DISPOSAL METHODS:

Rain is the ultimate carrier of pet waste directly into our local waterways. One simple and effective way to prevent pet waste from entering our waters is to dispose of it properly:

- Bag it, tie the bag securely, and place it in the garbage to avoid pollutants, debris, and litter
- Flush it down the toilet to enter the sanitary system
- Bag it and give it to waste management to dispose of properly
- For scheduled or larger scale cleanings, complete before heavy rainfall

THINGS TO CONSIDER ON YOUR NEXT WALK:

Proper waste disposal is important in the protection of our local waterways and is one of the many ways you can contribute to your neighborhood. **We only have one planet, so let's do our part as a community by spreading awareness and being responsible pet owners!**

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT POLLUTION IN OUR WATERWAYS?

Visit <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep>



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