



PET WASTE

WHAT IS STORMWATER POLLUTION?

When rain flows over streets and other surfaces, it picks up pollutants and carries them into the stormwater conveyance ("storm drain") system. This system is designed to prevent flooding by transporting water away from developed areas.



However, this water is not filtered or treated, and all the contaminants it contains eventually flow to our streams, lakes, and ocean where we swim and fish.

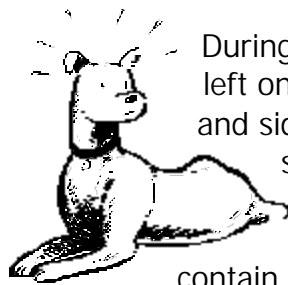


Once there, polluted runoff can harm wildlife and habitats. In some cases, it can even cause beach closures or make our fish and shellfish unsafe to eat.

Pet wastes are among the many common stormwater pollutants that can degrade water quality. Other examples include paint, oil, automotive fluids, construction debris, yard waste, pesticides, litter, pool chemicals, and dirty wash water.



WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET?



During rainfall, pet waste left on lawns, beaches, trails and sidewalks washes into storm drains. These wastes and the pathogens they contain (bacteria, parasites, and viruses) end up flowing directly into streams, lakes and the ocean where they can harm human health and the environment.



As pet wastes decompose, they demand a high level of oxygen from water. This demand can kill fish and plant life by reducing the amount of dissolved oxygen available to them.

Recent studies have shown dogs and cats to be major sources of fecal contamination at local beaches.

In addition to causing beach closures, this contamination can make people sick with sore throats, intestinal problems, rashes, nausea, and eye and ear infections.





WHAT CAN I DO?



The next time you're caught outside in the rain, take a look at what's running off the street, into the gutters, and down storm drain inlets.

You'll see that clean rainwater is quickly transformed into an oily, dirty mixture called urban runoff.

You can't see the bacteria and viruses in stormwater runoff, but they're there.

Do your part to keep our water clean.



PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET!

It's as easy as 1-2-3

1. Bring a bag



2. Clean it up



3. Dispose of it properly (toilet or trash)

