



Pet Waste Pollution Prevention

Pet waste which can be washed by rainfall into storm drains is hazardous to people, animals and the environment. Many people believe that storm water gets "cleaned" but it does not. Storm water receives no treatment, rather it flows directly into our creeks, rivers, lakes, and the ocean. When left in public areas or your yard pet waste is carried by rainwater into storm drains causing significant water pollution. In addition to polluting, improperly disposed of pet waste can transmit disease to pets, children and adults who garden.

Hazards of Pet Waste

Diseases or parasites that can be transmitted from pet waste, between pets or even to humans, include:

- Campylobacteriosis- A bacterial infection carried by dogs, cats and chickens that frequently causes diarrhea in humans.
- Cryptosporidium- A protozoan parasite carried by dogs, cats, mice, calves and many other mammals. Common symptoms include diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea and dehydration. May be fatal to people with depressed immune systems.
- Tinea- Commonly known as ringworm is a fungal infection that can be transmitted from used cat litter to humans and causes a scaly rash on the skin.
- Toxocariasis- Roundworms usually transmitted from dogs to humans, often without noticeable symptoms, but may cause vision loss, a rash, fever, or cough.
- Toxoplasma gondii- Sometimes found in cat feces, this parasitic protozoan causes the disease toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis, though not usually dangerous, for persons with compromised immune systems and for pregnant women it may have severe consequences. The parasite T. gondii has also been linked to the death of California Sea Otters by the Sea Otter Alliance.

Other examples of bacteria or parasites that are associated with pet waste are hookworms, fecal coliform bacteria, Giardiasis, Salmonella, Brucellosis, Yersinia enterocolitica, and Leptospirosis.

Pick up after your pets - it's the neighborly thing to do, and the right thing to do - for your pets, for other people, and for the environment.

Common Misconceptions

It will not take long for the pet waste to simply go away so there is no need to pick it up.

No, though the solids may quickly dissolve, pathogens and other contaminants can be washed into the nearest storm drain or waterway. Pathogens may stay for months to years and can make your children sick.

It's more natural to leave it there. Wild animals have been here for years

No watershed is naturally prepared to accommodate the amount of waste produced by domesticated dogs. For example, the number of wolves which would naturally inhabit an area the size of Clark County, Washington would be around 70 - compare that to the 110,000 dogs living there now!

I can bury cat or dog waste in my garden or put it in my compost bin.

Never bury mammal waste near where food will be grown or in compost to be used to grow food.

Pet waste goes in the yard waste bin.

No, pet waste is not yard waste. You should tie it securely in a bag and place it in your trash bin.

Quick Disposal Guide:

Pet	Best Practice	Compost	Yard-Waste	Flush Indoors
Dog	Place it in the trash in a well-sealed bag.	Never food safe. Ornamental plant Compost Options	Never	If trash is not available it is OK in small quantities. Do not use "flushable bags".
Cat	Place it in the trash in a well-sealed bag.	Never	Never	Only into septic system with septic safe litter. Waste water treatment may not kill <i>T. gondii</i> eggs, harming sea otters.
Chicken	Compost or dried then bagged and placed in the trash.	Garden safe Compost Basics	Never	Not recommended.

Detailed Instruction

Dog

- Pick up pet waste from your yard and put it in the trash. Place dog waste in a carefully tied bag to avoid spillage during trash collection.
- Carry disposable bags while walking your dog to pick up the waste.
- Flush it down the toilet if trash is not available. To avoid plumbing problems, never use a so-called "flushable bag" and don't flush any yard debris with it.
- Bury the waste away from where food is grown in several different locations. Bury waste at least 6-10 inches deep in areas. Cover it with soil to let it decompose slowly. This may not be practical in small yards.
- For use on ornamental plants only: composting is an option which removes waste without disposing of it as trash keeping the poop out of the landfill. Due to odor and health issues, composting dog waste must be managed at a high enough temperature. There are two ways that dog waste can be composted for ornamental plants.
 - The better method is above ground in a typical household plastic compost bin mixing sawdust with the poop.
 - The second more difficult option is an underground septic tank style composter. This style of composter uses bacteria to break down the waste. There are commercial options available, but there are also inexpensive do-it-yourself options. It is important to keep in mind that underground options are not suited for soils that drain too quickly or too slowly.

Cat

- Have cats use an indoor litter box. Provide a sheltered litter box for outdoor cats.
- Pick up pet waste from your yard and put it in the trash. Place cat waste in a carefully tied bag to avoid spillage during trash collection.
- Wear gloves when cleaning the litter box, pour or scoop all used litter in the box into a plastic garbage bag. Scrape litter stuck to the bottom of the pan with a dustpan or a straight edged litter scoop.
- Spray the bottom of the pan with the cleaning product of your choice and wipe it with paper towels. Dispose of towels in the garbage bag and tie the bag shut. Place the bag in the outside garbage if possible or double bag it for indoor trash.
- In some places used litter may transport hearty *T. gondii* eggs through the water treatment system to the sea where it can harm wildlife. Septic safe litter can be flushed only into septic systems.

Chicken

- Unlike waste from dogs and cats, chicken manure makes an excellent compost. Composting is an option that removes waste and turns it into vital nutrients for the garden.
- Gather Manure from chicken pens often to prevent health hazards. Use gloves when handling raw manure.
- Above ground commercially available compost bins are adequate.
- Compost may take weeks to months to mature.
- Follow proper composting guideline to ensure the food safety of the compost. Full composting instructions ([link to subpage under construction](#))
- Always wash garden produce before consuming it.
- For fast disposal dry manure can be scooped into trash bags sealed and placed in the trash, wear gloves and mask when handling the manure.

Telephone Contacts

707-543-4200 Storm water and the storm drain system

707-565-3375 Questions on hazardous materials disposal and recycling www.recyclenow.org

707-543-3800 If spilled material reaches the storm drain system

707-528-5151

or call 911 If spilled material is hazardous