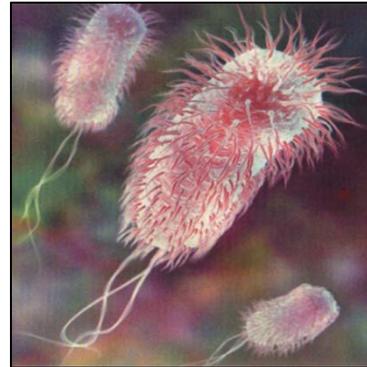


Protecting Water Quality by Cleaning Up Pet Waste

We love everything about our pets, and cleaning up after them is not always the most enjoyable activity. This important action helps keep our yards and streets clean and reduces stormwater pollution.

Have you heard the one about leaving dog poop on the ground because it is good for the soil? It isn't true -- pet waste from carnivores does not make good fertilizer. Dog feces can be teeming with disease-causing organisms such as bacteria, parasites, and viruses. Just one gram of dog poop can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria! If ingested, this type of bacteria can impact health causing cramps, diarrhea, intestinal illness, and urinary tract and kidney infections. In 1991, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency deemed pet waste a "non-point" source of water pollution which puts it in the same category as oil and toxic chemicals.



E. coli

How can a little pet poop end up contaminating our water? There are thousands of dogs and cats depositing waste on the ground throughout our community. If it isn't properly disposed of, the waste will get picked up by the next rain, taken via our streets to washes where people go for recreation or animals rely upon the water for their life cycle.

Pet waste contamination of stormwater is a problem with an easy solution:

- set a good example by "scooping the poop" and properly disposing waste from your pets;
- work with your neighbors to encourage responsible pet ownership;
- install plastic bag holders and bins for proper disposal around your neighborhood;

Here are other ways to help protect the quality of our stormwater:

- fixing leaky vehicles;
- harvesting rainwater on your property so it stays out of the dirty streets;
- don't be a litter bug and pick up litter when you see it;
- dispose of household hazardous waste properly;
- apply pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer to minimize runoff – or use more earth-friendly ways to reduce pests and grow healthy plants.



Pet Waste Bag Holder

More information about protecting stormwater quality, visit the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality's [Stormwater Management Program](#) or call (520) 724-7400.