

## The Connection to Water Quality

Pet Waste left in our yards comes into contact with storm water when it rains. The storm water becomes contaminated from contact with pet waste and carries pollutants into the storm sewer system. The storm sewers quickly drain the water directly to our area streams without any treatment.



### Facts About Pet Waste

Dogs are major contributors to pet waste in our environment.

However, all pets can contribute to the problem. The amount of feces produced by pets is estimated to be equivalent to a small municipality. Studies from other cities indicate that one third of people who walk their dogs do not pick up after their dog.

### Pollutants Associated With Pet Waste

**Bacteria**—One gram of dog feces contains 23 million fecal coliform bacteria.

**Oxygen demand**—As waste decays, it uses up the oxygen in the water that fish need.

**Nutrients**—Ammonia and nitrogen in the waste promotes unhealthy algae growth.

For more information about pet waste and its impact on the environment, you can visit the following web sites:

#### USEAP

[http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menufbmps/poll\\_3.cfm](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menufbmps/poll_3.cfm)

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/pdfs/petwaste.pdf>

#### MARC

[Http://www.marc.org/water/summer.htm](http://www.marc.org/water/summer.htm)

#### Stormwater Center

[http://www.stormwatercenter.net/Pollution-Prevention\\_Factsheets/AnimalWasteCollection.htm](http://www.stormwatercenter.net/Pollution-Prevention_Factsheets/AnimalWasteCollection.htm)

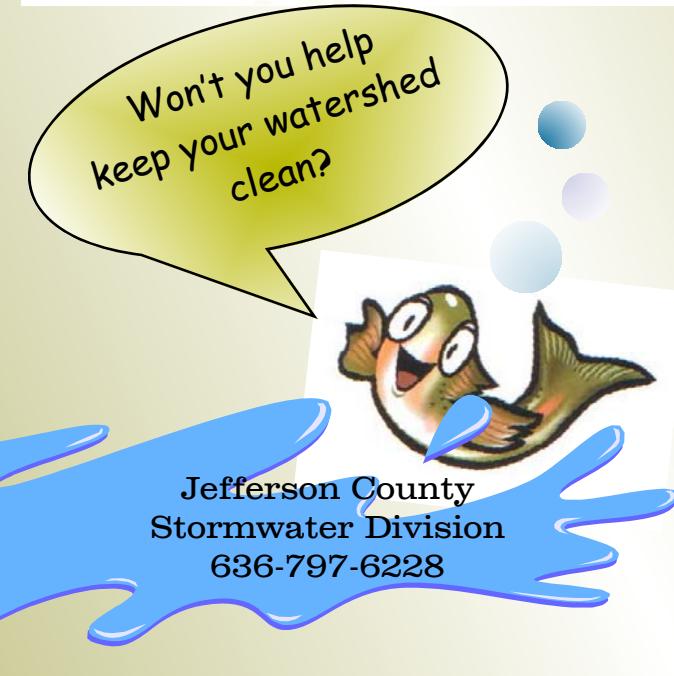


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# Pet Waste



## Is There A Problem With Animal Waste?

Water quality sampling of streams in most Jefferson County watersheds has found elevated bacteria levels in wet weather samples.

### Significant Sources of Bacteria



- Pets
- Humans
- Wildlife
- Livestock

Studies cited by the USEPA have found that urban storm water contains significant quantities of bacteria from nonhuman sources.



### Health Risks

Animal feces must be handled carefully because it contains bacteria, viruses and parasites that can infect humans and cause serious illness. The pathogens in animal waste include: Cryptosporidium, Giardia lamblia, Salmonella, Toxocariasis, and Toxoplasmosis.

**Always** wash your hands after handling pet waste. Do not place pet waste in compost piles or around vegetable gardens where pathogens can contaminate food products.



## What Is The Solution?

### Pet Owners

Acceptable pet waste management options for pet owners include:

- Put waste in a sealed bag and place in the trash.
- Flush down the toilet. (Do not flush plastic bags or kitty litter.)
- Bury waste in the soil at least 6 inches deep. (Do not bury in the garden.)
- Minimize pollution by having pets defecate in tall grass (greater than 4 inches) located away from storm inlets, since the grass acts as a filter and allows for natural decomposition.

### Comply with City Ordinances

Many cities have ordinances and post signs requiring the clean up of pet waste. Please be an advocate for pet waste clean up. Section 10.055.G of Jefferson County's Land Disturbance Ordinance prohibits the dumping of pet waste in any water body within the County.



## Sewer System Improvements

Jefferson County is working hard to provide storm water management to protect the public's health and safety.

- Jefferson County is addressing wet weather overflows, and improving storm water management.
- Jefferson County is enhancing efforts to identify and eliminate illicit connections and illegal discharges of wastewater to the storm water system.
- Jefferson County is committed to educating the public on ways to improve water quality.

As an individual, you are being asked to join in the effort to protect water quality by responsibly taking care of your pets' waste. You can demonstrate your commitment by signing the Pet Waste Pledge Card below.

### Pet Waste Pledge Card

I pledge to do my part to protect water quality in Jefferson County by:

- Picking up after my pet.
- Properly disposing of pet waste in the trash, toilet or by burying it.
- Encouraging others in my community to do the same.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_