

THE FERTILIZER MYTH

Contrary to popular belief, carnivorous animals, such as dogs, do not produce useable manure-fertilizer for plants. Beneficial manure-fertilizer comes from herbivores like horses and cows.

These animals consume vegetation and return unused waste back to the soil to be taken up by plants.

FAQs

Q: Why doesn't the sewage treatment plant clean this water before it reaches the waterway?



A: Sewage treatment plants only process wastewater from indoor plumbing. These plants do not treat rainwater.

Q: Other animals such as squirrels, rabbits, and birds already "use the facilities" outdoors. Why should I worry about my pet?

A: The waste from the number of pets in Arlington cannot be adequately or naturally absorbed into the environment.

Q: Should I pick up pet waste in my own yard?

A: Yes, absolutely! During a rain storm, this waste can be washed out of your yard, down a street and find its way into the storm sewer system. In addition, when waste is not removed, it leaves large quantities of nutrients that can burn out grasses by overfeeding them, creating a spotty looking yard. Pet waste can also attract rats—reason enough to keep your yard cleared!

DID YOU KNOW?

It is a violation of the City of Arlington's Code of Ordinances to leave your pet's waste on public property or private property (not your own).



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION OR PET WASTE ISSUES

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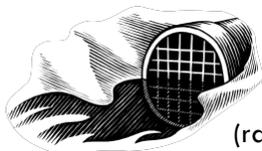


PET WASTE AND STORM WATER POLLUTION: A Pet Owner's Guide To Protecting Water Quality



Dangers of Improperly Handled Pet Waste

What is Stormwater Runoff?



Stormwater runoff is any precipitation (rain, sleet, snow, or hail)

that flows over land instead of seeping into the ground. In developed areas like Arlington, rainwater travels over paved areas, settles in gutters and ditches, and flows through storm drains. Stormwater is NOT treated and can pollute oceans, rivers, streams, creeks, and lakes.

Pet Waste & Stormwater

Pet waste left on streets, pavement, yards, driveways, or along the sides of the road does not magically disappear or fertilize the ground. Improperly disposed animal feces can be picked up by stormwater runoff and carried into storm drains or nearby water sources. Storm drains do not connect to sanitary sewer systems and treatment facilities, so pet waste can be the cause of significant stormwater pollution and present health risks to adults, children and other pets.

Pets and children who play in yards or parks and those who garden in yards where pets defecate are at risk for infections from disease-causing viruses, bacteria and parasites found in pet waste.



Some of the diseases that can be transmitted from pet waste to humans include:

- **Salmonellosis:** the most common bacterial infection transmitted to humans by other animals. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea.



- **Toxocariasis:** roundworms usually transmitted from dogs to humans, often without noticeable symptoms, but may cause vision loss, rash, fever, or cough.
- **Toxoplasmosis:** A parasite carried by cats that can cause birth defects such as mental retardation and blindness if a woman becomes infected during pregnancy; also a problem for people with suppressed immune systems.
- **Campylobacteriosis:** a bacterial infection carried by dogs and cats that frequently causes diarrhea in humans.
- **Fecal Coliform Bacteria:** found in the feces of warm blooded animals; poses potential health risk for those exposed to it in water.

Other Issues

Nutrients in pet waste also encourage weed and algae growth, thus causing serious problems for water quality. This nutrient-rich water is cloudy, green, unattractive and unhealthy for swimming, boating, fishing, or



drinking. Finally, when pet wastes decays, it uses up oxygen and releases ammonia, which can lead to fish kills.



What can you do to help?

- Always clean up after your pet, even in your own yard. Your pet's waste is NOT fertilizer.



- Bury your waste in a hole that is at least 5-6" deep and cover it with soil away from gardens, ditches, storm drains, and waterways.

It will decompose slowly so bury waste in different locations throughout the yard.

- Flush your pet's waste down the toilet where it will flow through the sanitary sewers for treatment.



- Carry disposable bags with you while you walk your pet.

- Throw your pet's waste in the trash.



- Tell others not to leave their pet's waste on the ground.