

Pet Waste Can Affect Water Quality

Despite ensuring that your pets don't defecate directly into water sources, their waste can still affect community and natural bodies of water. Some pet owners may erroneously assume that depositing excrement into a storm sewer is a viable disposal method. Storm sewers, however, empty into lakes and streams. Along with polluting the water with bacteria and parasites, pet waste that finds its way to natural bodies of water promotes the flowering of unwanted algae and weeds. Chemical reactions that take place in the water after coming into contact with pet waste can also negatively affect wildlife and contribute to the reduction of fish populations.

- [Pet Waste and Water Quality](#) (PDF)
- [Dog Owner Tips: Solve the Storm Water Pollution Problem](#) (PDF)
- [Protect the Water You and Your Pet Love](#) (PDF)
- [Water Quality Protection: Pet Waste](#) (PDF)

How to Properly Dispose of Pet Waste

While there are several methods that pet owners employ to dispose of their animals' excrement, some are better than others in terms of effectiveness, safety, and legality. Burying waste is one of the most natural and safest ways to get rid of excrement. A hole with a depth of about six inches can keep waste safely out of sight and reduce the chances that it will attract other animals. Flushing pet waste is also an acceptable option for individuals who prefer to stay within a home but would appreciate a fast and easy way to dispose of waste. When removing waste and cleaning surface areas, all pet owners should wear disposable gloves to protect their health. After handling waste, wash your hands with soap and water to keep your body free from bacteria and disease.

Remove all remnants of waste from areas near water. This includes drains, ditches, and wells. Avoid attempting to compost pet waste in a garden, as the excrement will not naturally break down and can pose a health hazard to vegetable beds. And think twice about throwing pet waste into your trash can: Local laws may prohibit this activity and classify it as a form of pollution.