



PET WASTE POLLUTES



Having a pet is both a pleasure and a responsibility. Not only do pet owners have a responsibility for the care, feeding and general welfare of their pets, they have a responsibility for proper disposal of pet waste.

Pet waste can be a health hazard. If improperly disposed of, it can expose humans and other animals to harmful bacteria, viruses and parasites. If a dog leaves two piles of waste on the ground on a daily basis, think how much waste accumulates in a week, month or year. Now imagine all of that waste flowing into the Plum Creek Watershed during a rain storm because of improper disposal. See the problem?



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.



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.



Dangers of Improperly Handled Pet Waste—Some of the diseases that can be transmitted from pet waste to humans include: salmonellosis, toxoplasmosis, campylobacteriosis, and fecal coliform bacteria. 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.

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

WHAT CAN I DO?



- Bury pet waste in a hole that is at least 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 sewers for treatment. Don't flush kitty litter as the litter can clog your pipes.
- Carry disposable bags with you while you walk your pet.
- Throw your pet's waste in the trash, tie the bags off so they don't spill.
- Tell others about the risks of leaving their pet's waste on the ground, yard, and street.



This publication was prepared in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The preparation of this publication was financed by the City of Lockhart and through grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.


 City of Lockhart
 308 W. San Antonio Street
 Lockhart, Texas 78644
 (512) 398-3461



For more information on Nonpoint Source Pollution and fun educational activities, please visit:
<http://www.lockhart-tx.org/web98/citydepartments/publicworks.asp>