

## Did You Know?

**T**he storm drainage system is separate from the sanitary sewer system. The sanitary sewer collects wastewater from sinks, toilets, dishwashers, and floor drains and directs it to a water treatment plant where the contaminants are removed before it is released to waterways.

The storm drainage system, however, collects stormwater runoff from parking lots, streets, and lawns and directs it to streams and rivers without treatment. That is why it is so important to implement stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) on a daily basis to make sure that harmful pollutants, like bacteria and chemicals, do not end up in the region's local waterways. Even pet poop contains harmful bacteria, such as *E. coli* and fecal coliform. If left on the ground, it is swept off by stormwater runoff straight to local waterways, making them potentially unsafe for human contact. So, "bag it and trash it."

## Proper Disposal of Pet Waste Protects Local Waters



*Pet waste has harmful bacteria that can damage local receiving waters. Please, scoop the poop!*

- Why worry about Pet Waste?
- Are there Stormwater Best Management Practices for Disposing of Pet Wastes?
- Can pet waste contaminate local waterways?
- Doesn't stormwater go to a treatment plant?

See inside . . .

# Stormwater Best Management Practices for Proper Pet Waste Disposal



For more information, contact:

Community Development  
Stormwater Management Division  
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<http://www.roanokecountyva.gov/>



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**A Guide for  
Roanoke County  
Pet Owners**

## Pet Waste Pollutes

Pet waste left on streets or lawns does not just go away or fertilize the grass. Pet waste, along with the bacteria in it, washes into storm drains, ditches, streams, and lakes, and it can travel for miles in the water. When present in large concentrations, the harmful bacteria in pet waste (i.e., fecal coliform and *E. coli* (*Escherichia coli*)) can contaminate local receiving waters and make them unfit for human contact. While it may not seem like a big deal if a pet “contributes” some waste to the environment, think about how many animals are out there. In Roanoke County alone, it is estimated that there are some 22,000 dogs that generate about 1,686 tons of fecal material per year. That is a lot of poop!



Of course, there is no such thing as a poop fairy or any other magical being that swoops down to pick up all that waste. That job is left to the humans, to not only pick it up but to properly dispose of it. So, the bottom line is this. . .

### POOP POLLUTES:

- Neighborhoods
- Rivers
- Streams
- Lakes
- Beaches

*So, do the right thing.*

## SCOOP THE POOP

## Best Management Practices

Stormwater Best Management Practices (i.e., BMPs) are methods, actions, or activities that may be helpful in preventing stormwater pollution. Since most of the area waterways, including the Roanoke River and its tributaries, are impaired due to high levels of bacteria, it makes sense to employ stormwater BMPs relative to pet waste to limit further bacteria pollution.



Here are several BMPs related to pet waste that are easy to do:

- Clean up after your pets every single time. Also, encourage your neighbors to do the same.
- Teach children how to properly clean up after their pets.
- Take advantage of the complimentary waste bags offered in dispensers at parks and along greenways.
- Reuse plastic bags (bread bags, newspaper bags, grocery bags, etc.) for picking up pet waste.
- Carry extra bags when walking your pet or when traveling. Offer extra bags to owners who are without their own bags.

## What Actions To Avoid?



To protect local waterways from pet waste, avoid the following activities:

- Putting pet waste in storm drainage inlets.
- Leaving pet waste on the lawn.
- Throwing pet waste out in the woods.
- Tossing pet waste over the fence into someone else's yard.
- Dropping pet waste into drainage ditches.
- Rinsing pet waste from kennel floors directly onto the ground.

## What to do?



**BAG IT ~ TRASH IT**