

## **Pet Waste**

Rain runoff can carry pet waste directly into waterways or storm drains, which usually empty without any treatment into a stream, river, or estuary. Untreated fecal matter can be a source of harmful bacteria and nutrients. Just as we don't want human sewage in our water, it is important to prevent pet waste from being carried into our waterways.

It isn't just water quality that can suffer. Leaving pet waste on the ground, especially in public areas like parks or playing fields, may pose a risk to children, adults, and even pets who can be exposed to diseases.

Consider this....

- Pet waste carries disease causing organisms such as Giardia and Salmonella which can make water unsafe for drinking or swimming;
- To protect the public from illness, swimming beaches and shellfish beds can be shut down due to bacterial contamination, and pet waste can be a cause of that contamination;
- Pet waste left on playing fields or in parks can be unhealthy and messy...no one wants to step in dog waste at the park or ball field!

There are over 8,000 registered dogs in Brevard County. One dog probably "goes" at least once, maybe twice, a day. That's a lot of dogs and a lot of waste!

### **DO YOUR PART: SCOOP THE POOP!**

Scooping your pooch's poop isn't just a courtesy for those walking behind you; it's the healthy and environmentally sound thing to do. Lots of people may not pick up after their dog because they think it's gross or they're not sure how to dispose of the waste. Picking up after your dog is not only easy, in Palm Bay, it's the law!

Here are some easy steps for dealing with your pet's waste:

- Always carry a plastic bag when you walk your dog. Re-using an old newspaper delivery bag or plastic grocery bag works well. To avoid unpleasant surprises, check the bag for holes before your pet's walk!
- Use the bag as a glove to pick up the pet waste. Turn the bag inside out around the waste, scoop it up, seal the bag, and dispose of it in a trashcan. You can also flush un-bagged pet waste down the toilet.
- Don't place bagged or un-bagged pet waste in a storm drain or hose pet waste towards storm drains as they drain directly to a stream, river, lake or other waterbody.
- Remove waste from areas where children play or you garden.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water after dealing with pet waste!

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact Kaylene Wheeler, NPDES Coordinator, City of Palm Bay at 321-953-8996 or [wheelk@palmbayflorida.org](mailto:wheelk@palmbayflorida.org) or visit [www.palmflorida.org/publicwroks/stormwater](http://www.palmflorida.org/publicwroks/stormwater).