

Pet Waste Doesn't Belong in the Drain

Stormwater runoff is precipitation from rain or snowmelt that flows over the ground. Runoff is usually collected by catch basins and then is conveyed untreated into waterbodies that we use for recreational activities like swimming, fishing, or as a source of drinking water.

Any pet waste dumped into catch basins will be discharged untreated to the closest stream, pond, lake or river, causing health and environmental problems, as well as becoming a public nuisance.

Did You Know?

- Pet waste significantly contributes to pollutants (bacteria and organic matter) in Waltham's streams and ponds such as the Charles River, Chester and Beaver Brooks, Hardy Pond, and any receiving wetlands.
- Pet Waste dumped or washed into catch basins (stormwater drains) is carried directly to rivers through the stormwater drain system. Even waste left in the street, far from a catch basin, can be washed into the drains during storms.
- Pet waste often carries viruses and bacteria that are extremely harmful to humans.
- Pet waste contains nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients that accelerate growth of damaging algae and aquatic weeds and harm aquatic life.

What You Can Do

- Always clean up after your pet, and dispose of the waste in a sealed or tied bag in a trashcan, or into a toilet. Do not flush plastic bags into the toilet.
- Encourage your neighbors and other pet owners to be responsible; it is not hard, and it is part of the responsibility of owning a pet.

What You Should Not Do

- Do not dispose of pet waste in a catch basin (stormwater drain). These systems go directly to local rivers.
- Do not use pet waste as a fertilizer. Bacteria in pet waste does far more harm than good.
- Do not add pet waste to a compost pile. The pile will never get hot enough to kill disease-causing organisms.

How Much Will It Cost You?

- The City of Waltham performs a costly stormwater outfall-monitoring program. Pet waste that has been improperly disposed of can easily return positive results for contaminants.
- When severe contamination is identified in an outfall, an investigation process begins which will identify the source of contamination per EPA's requirements.

• However, when the source of contamination is pet waste, it is almost impossible to identify the origin of the contamination, due to its sporadic nature. The investigation efforts are very expensive and are paid **with your tax dollars.**

• You can help the City of Waltham save thousands of dollars every year by disposing of your pet waste properly.



Be Prepared

If you are prepared, picking up after your pet is easy. Simply carry a plastic bag with you on every walk with your pet, and you will have the equipment to remove your pet's waste. There are even compact, refillable bag dispensers that you can conveniently attach right to your dog's leash.

Many parks and recreational areas have courtesy bags and disposal boxes, designed specifically for pet waste.

Avoid letting your pet do his business within 200 feet of a water body.

In addition, of course, never throw pet waste into a storm drain. Dispose of the waste when you get home, and do not forget to wash your hands!

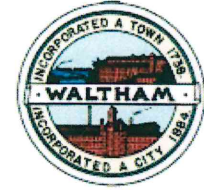
Do Not Feed the Fowl

Unfortunately, an activity many of us enjoyed as children actually has damaging impacts, not only for the waterfowl themselves, but also for local waters. While ducks, geese, and swans love to eat the bread we offer them, it lacks the nutrition of their natural diet and can cause long-term health problems. Feeding waterfowl also causes them to congregate in higher numbers than they would if they had to rely solely on their own natural food supplies. This results in large quantities and concentrations of waste for local waters!



For more information,
Contact:

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HELP KEEP OUR WATERSHED CLEAN

PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET



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