

# Keep Pet Waste Out of Our Water

## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH PET WASTE?

When owners neglect to pick up after their animals, pet waste gets left behind and can wash into storm drains. The waste then becomes a pollutant in the runoff that drains into local waterways; lakes, rivers, estuaries, bays or the ocean. On land, as well as in the water, the waste left by our pets can spread harmful diseases through numerous types of bacteria and parasites.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

- An average size dog dropping contains three billion fecal coliform bacteria.
- In addition to fecal coliform, dogs can also be significant hosts of both Giardia and Salmonella.
- According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, 40% of U.S. households include at least one dog. The association's statistics also show the growth in pet ownership: Americans owned 54.6 million dogs in 1996 and 68 million dogs in 2000.
- Those numbers add up to a lot of kibble. If all dog owners also owned and used a pooper-scooper, there would not be a problem. But several studies have found that roughly 40% of Americans don't pick up their dog's feces.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

How can you get rid of pet waste and help keep our waters clean?

- Always clean up after your pet.
- Carry a plastic bag to pick up your pet's waste.
  - Reuse old bags: grocery, sandwich, newspaper, produce and bread bags to pick up and contain pet waste.
  - Keep a supply of bags near your dog's leash.
  - Tie bags onto the leash if you don't have a pocket or pack
- Do not throw pet waste near a storm drain; use a trash can. Pet waste can also be flushed down a toilet, but please don't flush the bag.
- Make sure to dispose of pet waste in a sealed bag so it doesn't spill during trash collection.
- Encourage other pet owners to be responsible.

**Report suspicious dumping or unusual substances coming from storm drains call 318-441-6231.**

