



GreenTip
How Do You Measure Up?



Pet Waste

We Americans have a great love for our pets – cats, dogs and even less common pet species such as rabbits and ferrets and other small, furry animals abound in human society. When you consider the density of the pet population in areas of human habitation, it's easy to understand that problems could arise from the waste our pets produce. In nature, wild animal waste is usually trapped where it falls and left to decompose in place. There is nothing natural about the concentration of domestic animals, especially in urban areas. Most often pet waste is carried away from lawns, sidewalks and streets by water runoff that occurs during storms. Because the runoff ends up in storm drains that empty directly into creeks, rivers and streams, pet waste poses the significant hazard of bacterial contamination of our surface waters.

What's the solution? Clean up your pet's waste!

If you have a yard where your pet waste accumulates, remove it regularly from your lawn. If you walk your pet, be sure to scoop the poop. Reuse plastic grocery bags and food storage bags to clean up your pet's waste and place it into your trash.

While composting or burying pet feces may seem logical, it's not very safe. These disposal methods do not kill the bacteria and other pathogens that are contained in pet waste. For this reason, it's also best not to include pet waste in the yard waste you put out at the curb for collection. Landfills are lined to keep materials contained and to prevent discharge from entering surrounding soil and water. This effectively eliminates the potential for your pet's waste to contaminate our environment.

If you're considering the purchase of a pet waste digester or septic system, choose carefully. Be sure any system you install is capable of functioning properly with the climate and soil types in our area. Be equally sure that your disposal system actually treats your pet's waste and prevents contamination of surrounding land and water.

Flushing your pet waste is fine, if your home is served by public sewer. If you have a septic tank, flushing is not a good idea. Because of high concentrations of ash and hair, pet waste has the potential to exceed the design capacity of the septic system.

Remember, if you don't clean up your pet's waste, you could be unleashing hazards, such as salmonella, e. coli and giardia, into your neighborhood and our community.

Be responsible!

When it comes to taking care of our environment, how do you MEASURE UP?

