



What's the Scoop on Pet Waste?

Environmental Impacts

If left on the ground, rainwater can carry pet waste into a nearby storm drain. From there, it flows untreated to the nearest creek and ends up in the San Francisco Bay. Pet waste releases pathogens which can create unsafe living conditions for wildlife.¹

Human Health Impacts

Pet waste carries pathogens that can harm humans as well. Children are likely to come in contact with pet waste on the ground, exposing them to parasites such as *Salmonella* or *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*).¹

Do your Doody:

Always pick up your pet's waste immediately. Properly dispose of the waste by throwing it in the garbage. Follow these tips:

- 🐾 Be prepared! Carry extra plastic bags with you on every walk with your pet. Find the Environmental Services team at community events to receive free bags.
- 🐾 Avoid letting your pet do its business within 200 feet of a water body.
- 🐾 Never throw pet waste into a storm drain.
- 🐾 Never throw pet waste into the FoodCycle or yard trimming carts at home.

Together, Let's Stop Poo-llution!



Sunnyvale



¹Exposure to Animal Feces and Human Health: A Systematic Review and Proposed Research Priorities. Environmental Science Technology. doi: 10.1021/acs.est.7b02811



Common Misconceptions

Rain DOES NOT wash it away

Rain or irrigation usually carries pet waste into the San Francisco Bay before it decomposes. Once there, it stimulates excessive algae growth. This reduces the oxygen in waterways which harms aquatic ecosystems.² Ultimately, this can make waterways unable to sustain life.

Pet waste is NOT fertilizer

Pets have high protein diets, making their waste too acidic. Once in the soil, their excessive nutrient content can harm plants and cause 'burns' in lawn. In addition, pet waste carries diseases that can harm exposed wildlife, such as canine parvovirus, giardiasis or whipworm infections.³

Pet waste is NOT natural

Wildlife feces can spread seeds and provide nutrients to an ecosystem, but pet waste doesn't. It can introduce foreign nutrients and pathogens into an environment. Pet waste may also contain parasites like tapeworms and *Taxoplasma gondii*.¹

Pet waste can NOT be composted

Do not put your pet waste in your backyard compost, FoodCycle or yard trimmings carts. There is no effective method to kill the bacteria in it and the pathogens can last in the soil for years.

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² Contrasting Nitrogen and Phosphorus Budgets in Urban Watersheds and Implications for Managing Urban Water Pollution. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1618536114

³ Environmental Contamination by Dog's Faeces: A Public Health Problem? International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. doi: 10.3390/ijerph10010072