



Gwinnett County

Department of Water Resources

Pet Waste Pollution

Do you know what will happen to your pet's waste if it is left on the ground? Sure someone might step on it, but more importantly it will be washed into our local lakes, rivers, and streams the next time it rains.

Stormwater runoff can pick up small particles of pollutants, such as pet waste, along with any bacteria present as it flows over the ground. A few small particles might not seem like much, but what about when you have an entire neighborhood's worth of pet waste washing down into the storm drain during a rain event?

This kind of contamination is called nonpoint source pollution because there is no single, specific source. Essentially, any pollutants that are on the ground within a particular drainage basin will be concentrated into the basin's waterway as the rain washes it down the storm drain.

Storm drains lead directly to our natural waterways and they have no filters. This means that your pet's waste is ending up in the same places where we like to swim, fish, play and go boating. Pet waste in stormwater can lead to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria and it also depletes the waterway's oxygen levels as it decomposes. Without oxygen in the water many aquatic animals will die and the ecology of the stream becomes impaired.

So pick up after your pet and dispose of the waste properly. For more information, please visit www.gwinnettH2O.com

