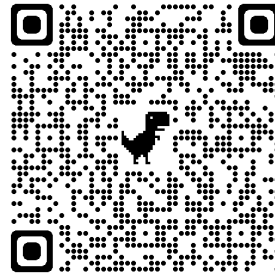




#### WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

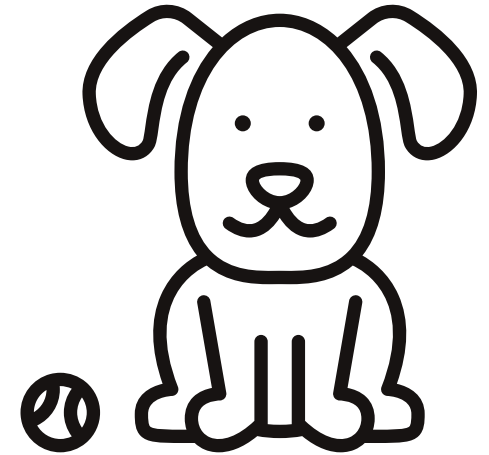
Picking up after your pet isn't just a courtesy for those walking behind you; it is also the healthy and environmentally sound thing to do. Pet waste can be a significant source of water pollution. When pet waste is not properly disposed, it can be carried by rain or snow runoff directly into nearby waterbodies or into storm drains. Storm drains in streets and neighborhoods usually flow directly to a stream, river, or estuary without any treatment. Untreated animal fecal matter and wastes can become a source of harmful bacteria and nutrients in water. Just as we don't want human sewage in our water, it is important to prevent pet waste from being carried into our waterways because of negligence.

Learn more about Ridgefield's  
Stormwater Management Program



Town of Ridgefield  
Office of the Town Engineer  
400 Main Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

**DON'T LET OUR  
WATER QUALITY  
GO TO THE DOGS**



A PET OWNER'S GUIDE  
TO MANAGING PET WASTE





## FACTS ABOUT PET WASTE

When you fail to clean up after your pet, the poop left on sidewalks and lawns is both unpleasant and a nuisance. But it can become an even bigger problem when it rains. Stormwater carries pet waste into nearby rivers, lakes and streams, creating a health hazard for people and doing a lot of damage to the environment:

- A single gram of pet waste contains an average of 23 million fecal coliform bacteria, some of which cause diseases in humans.
- Waters that contain high levels of bacteria and other pathogens from animal waste are unfit for human contact.
- As pet waste decays, it uses up oxygen that fish and aquatic life need.
- Pet waste contains nutrients that can cause excessive algae growth in a river or lake, upsetting the natural balance.



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Pet waste should never enter storm drains and surface water. Pet owners are required to pick up after pets when away from their property, and to pick up waste from their property if it attracts flies and can pose a health risk. Fortunately, there are actions pet owners can take to help keep our water clean:

Pick up pet waste from your yard. It is not a fertilizer.

**Bring It.** Carry disposable bags while walking your dog to pick up and dispose of waste properly.

**Bag It.** Use the disposable bag as a glove to pick up the waste. Scoop it up and then turn the bag inside out around the waste.

**Toss It.** If you dispose of pet waste in the trash, wrap it carefully to avoid spillage during collection. You can also flush your pet's unbagged waste down the toilet, so it can be treated at a sewage treatment plant. If your yard is large enough, you can bury the pet waste in your yard, at least 12 inches deep and cover with at least eight inches of soil to let it decompose slowly. Bury the waste in several different locations and keep it away from vegetable gardens.

**DO NOT** place the bagged or un-bagged pet waste in a storm drain or hose the pet waste towards storm drains as they drain directly to a stream, river, lake or other waterbody.

**DON'T LET OUR WATER QUALITY GO TO THE DOGS**

## HANDY TIPS

Put bags in the car or tie them to the leash, so you'll be prepared when you travel with your pet.

Place bags by the door so you don't forget them.

Talk to your family and friends about stormwater pollution and picking up after their pets!

Make use of "pet waste stations" in your neighborhood or local park.

