

Pet waste is a significant source of fecal bacteria in Stafford County. When pet waste is left on lawns or on streets, rain carries it down ditches and into the storm drains.


Storm drains do not connect to water treatment facilities! Instead, they drain directly to our streams and eventually reach the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay.



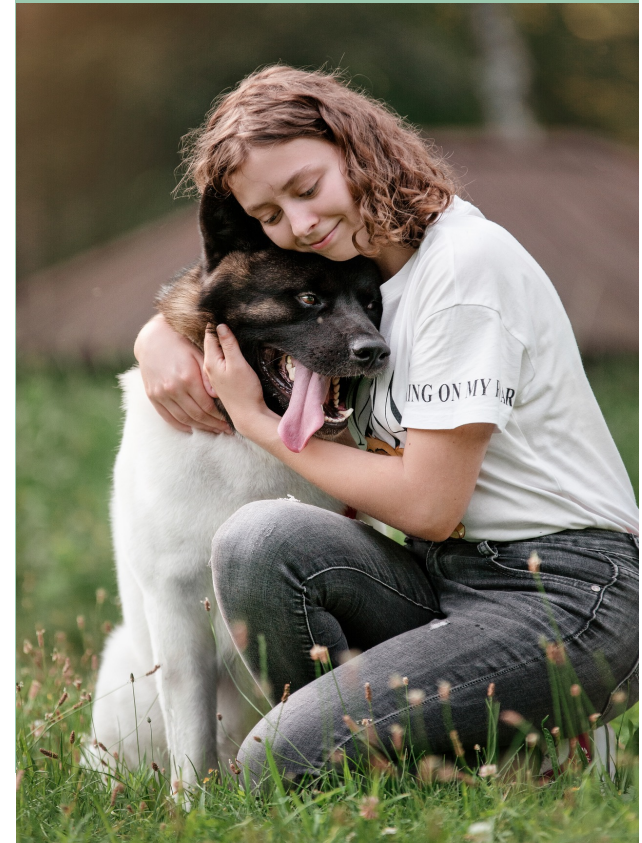
## 6 Things you can do to reduce pet waste pollution

1. Always carry and use bags to clean up after your pet.
2. Place the bag directly in a trash bin. Never leave it on the ground!
3. Never dispose of pet waste in/near a storm drain.
4. Don't hose down pet waste from your lawn.
5. Flush pet waste directly down the toilet (do not flush plastic bags).
6. Encourage other pet owners to be responsible!

**"Only Rain Down the Drain"  
It's The Law!**

 Failure to properly dispose of pet waste is a Class 4 misdemeanor and subject to a \$250 fine (County Code §5-36).

*When Nature Calls,  
Please Pick Up  
After Your Pet*



# Pet Waste, Water Quality, and Your Health



## Are you polluting our water?

Did you know that many of Stafford's streams exceed Virginia's standards for fecal coliform bacteria? Pet waste is a significant source of bacteria.

As pet waste decays in water, it uses up oxygen and sometimes releases ammonia. Low oxygen levels and the presence of ammonia, combined with warm temperatures, can be toxic to fish and aquatic life.

Pet waste also contains nutrients that promote weed and algae growth.

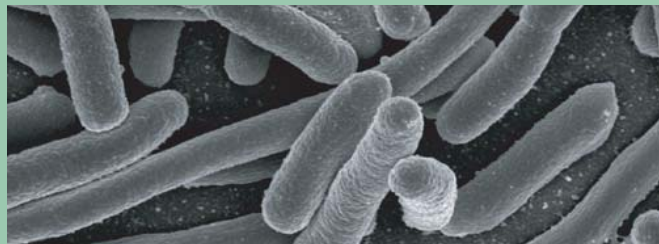
*E. coli is only one of the many types of bacteria found in pet waste!*

## Are you risking your health?

When pet waste is disposed of improperly, it is carried by runoff directly into our local waterways. This affects water quality and can be harmful to human health.

Dog waste contains disease-causing organisms that can be transmitted to humans.

Children who play outside are at the highest risk of infection from bacteria and parasites found in pet waste.



**Simply picking up after your pet can significantly reduce human health risks and improve local water quality.**

- 🐾 Bag up the pet waste and place it in the trash.
- 🐾 Never dispose of pet waste in or near a storm drain.
- 🐾 Encourage other pet owners to be responsible.

Visit these great sites for more information:

**Stafford County Website**  
[www.staffordcountyva.gov](http://www.staffordcountyva.gov)

Scan the QR code for a direct link to the Environmental Division website



**Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners**  
[www.onlyrain.org](http://www.onlyrain.org)

Scan the QR code for additional tips on proper lawn care, auto maintenance, and pet waste disposal



**KEEP STAFFORD**  
**COUNTY SAFE**  
**AND CLEAN!**

**STAFFORD**  
*Virginia*