

# STORMWATER COALITION



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*Information provided by the Stormwater Coalition, a committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG).*

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City of Oregon  
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## Don't Let Your Pet Pollute

Pet waste left on the street or lawn does not just go away. It is often washed into storm drains, ditches, streams, rivers, and then into Lake Erie. Kitty litter dumped outside can also be washed into drains and end up in the lake. Since stormwater is not treated, bacteria in pet waste can end up in rivers and Lake Erie from which we get our drinking water.

### Why You Should Pick Up After Your Pet

- Cleaning up after a cat or dog is something we can all do to keep our water safe for fishing and swimming.
- Pet waste is not good lawn fertilizer; the bacteria in waste does more harm than good.
- Proper disposal of waste can prevent the spread of harmful bacteria and viruses from animals to humans.
- Organic matter in pet waste can degrade water quality. The decay of waste uses up dissolved oxygen and releases ammonia. This process can kill fish and other aquatic life.

### What You Can Do

- Pick up pet waste from your yard. No one wants to play or eat outside in a yard fouled with pet waste. Simple scooping tools make this job easy.
- Carry disposable bags while walking your dog so you can pick up and dispose of waste properly.
- Encourage your neighbors and other pet owners to be responsible. Support projects that share information about pet waste and make pet waste pick up easier.

### How Do You Dispose of Pet Waste Properly

- The ideal solution is to pick up after your dog and flush the waste in a toilet. That way the waste is treated before water returns to rivers and lakes.
- You can also put animal waste in your trash bin. Dispose of waste in the bag you collect it in. Just tie the bag tightly to avoid a spill.

### What You Should Not Do

- Do not put pet waste in a catch basin, storm drain, or in the street.
- Do not add pet waste to a compost bin. The compost pile will not get warm enough to kill disease-causing organisms.
- Do not use pet waste as lawn or garden fertilizer.

Remember, stormwater is not treated and goes directly into ditches, rivers, and lakes. We can all help protect our water supply by being careful about what gets in the stormwater system.