



NOT MY PET!

My pet *can't* be part of a water pollution problem!

My pet is a member of the family. He watches TV with me on the sofa. He sleeps in my lap.

Of course, it's not your pet alone, and sure, you keep your pet clean. Water pollution results when we add all of our pets together. Research by the American Pet Products Association shows that 40 percent of U.S. households have at least one dog. Based on public information survey results, our stormwater experts estimate that there are over 45,000 dogs in Tallahassee.

This isn't just a problem in our community.

Water pollution from pet waste inevitably occurs when we concentrate ourselves-and our pets-into cities. **There is no sewage treatment for pet waste.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that pet waste contains bacteria and parasites which can make water unsafe for contact. (U.S. EPA).

**In Tallahassee it is the law to pick up after your pets in public spaces.
(TALLAHASSEE CODE OF ORDINANCES NO. 08-O-23AA)**



There's a special problem with dogs.

Dogs are built to eat almost anything and they have a large number of diverse intestinal bacteria to deal with that wide variety of food. Combine that with the sheer numbers of dogs we have crammed into Tallahassee's 100 square miles and the problem becomes significant.

| Animal Type | Average fecal coliforms (intestinal bacteria) per gram of feces |
|-------------|---|
| Wild Rabbit | 20 |
| Horse | 12,600 |
| Cow | 230,000 |
| Mouse | 330,000 |
| Dog | 23,000,000 |

SOURCE: Maunn, Chris. 2003. Nisqually Reach Shellfish Protection Group Report and Recommendations. Thurston County, Washington.

Wild animals aren't concentrated like our pets are.

Animals in nature recycle the nutrients that are already in the natural environment, while dog food introduces a new source of nutrients into the ecosystem.

When pet waste is washed into lakes or streams, it can release ammonia and consume oxygen as it decays. Pet waste also contains nutrients that encourage algae growth. It's an issue of hygiene, goodwill and good sense. Over half of the residents in our community don't have pets and shouldn't have to deal with what ours leave behind.

So... what to do with pet waste?

- **Bury it in the yard.**
- **Put it in the trash receptacle.**
- **Flush it down the toilet (without the bag).**

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