

# PET CARE

Unlike water in sanitary sewers (from sinks and toilets), water in storm drains is **not treated or cleaned** before entering our waterways and should never contain any pollutants. Pet care can generate a variety of waste products such as bacteria, nutrients, chemicals, and other harmful substances. If not properly managed, these pollutants can be transported to Orange County's creeks, rivers, and ocean through our storm drain system.

## Understand the Best Practices for Taking Care of Your Pets at Home



## Who is H<sub>2</sub>OC?

**H<sub>2</sub>OC is YOU.** H<sub>2</sub>OC is also a cooperative stormwater program which includes all 34 cities in Orange County, the County of Orange, and Orange County Flood Control District (OCFCD). Clean and healthy beaches, creeks, rivers, bays, wetlands, and ocean are important to Orange County. H<sub>2</sub>OC provides resources to residents and businesses to encourage personal action and prevent polluted runoff from entering our waterways.

## Join Us

Visit [h2oc.org](http://h2oc.org) to learn more about runoff, water pollution, and how you can be the solution to runoff pollution and protect our water resources.

## Contact

📞 **24-hour Pollution Reporting Hotline:**  
877-89-SPILL (877-897-7455)

📱 **24-hour Pollution Reporting Website:**  
[myOCeServices.ocgov.com](http://myOCeServices.ocgov.com)

*For emergencies, dial 911*

\*[oclandfills.com/hazardous-waste](http://oclandfills.com/hazardous-waste)

# HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE PET OWNER TO PROTECT OUR WATERWAYS



# POLLUTANTS

Pollutants from pet care can harm aquatic life, swimmers, surfers, and divers.

## Bacteria

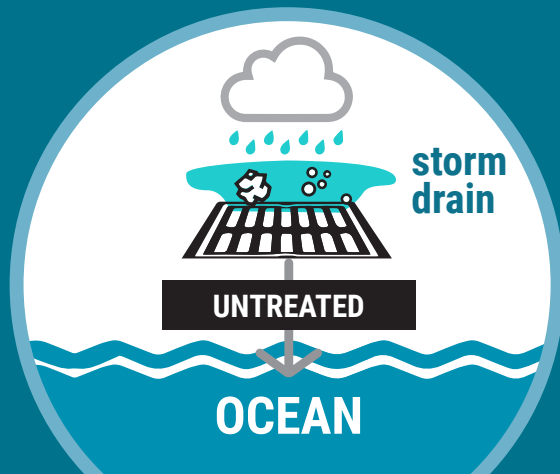
Bacteria from pet waste accounts for a portion of the bacteria in urban waterways. If runoff from rain or sprinklers comes in contact with pet waste, it can enter our creeks, rivers, and the ocean and impact human health and damage the environment. A single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria.

## Nutrients

Nutrients in pet waste, like nitrogen and phosphorus, cause algae to grow uncontrollably if they flow into waterways. This process, called eutrophication, blocks sunlight from penetrating bodies of water and reduces the available oxygen for aquatic life, which can devastate underwater ecosystems.

## Chemicals & Debris

Pet care products like flea control treatments and shampoos, as well as fur and dirt, can pollute waterways if pets are bathed outdoors.



# PET CARE BEST PRACTICES

Discharges to the storm drain system are prohibited, so use these Best Management Practices to protect our waterways.

## Pet Waste

- ✓ Pick up all pet waste with a bag or pooper scooper - it's the law.
- ✓ Dispose of all pet waste by placing it in a closed trash bin, or flushing waste down the toilet.
- ✓ Carry poop bags with you whenever taking your dog for a walk.
- ✓ Bring extra bags so you don't run out and can help someone else in need.
- ✓ Monitor the weather and pick up all pet waste from your yard before rain.

## Grooming

- ✓ Bathe pets indoors or have pets professionally groomed, whenever possible since water from sinks and tubs flows to the sewer system where it is treated.
- ✓ If pets are washed outside, minimize water use and wash them on landscaped areas to prevent washwater from flowing into the street or the storm drain.
- ✓ Properly dispose of unused flea control products (shampoo, sprays, or collars) at a county household hazardous waste center.\*



For more information, visit:

<https://h2oc.org/resources/pollution-prevention-for-residents/animal-care/> or scan the QR code.

## Pet Care

- ✓ Vaccinate your pets to keep them healthy and reduce the possibility of harmful pathogens in their waste.
- ✓ Drain fish tanks and aquariums into a sink or over landscaped areas, never into a waterway or channel.
- ✓ Wash pet homes on permeable surfaces like grass or gravel.
- ✓ Dispose of pet bedding properly by sealing it in a bag then placing it in a covered trash bin.

