

Wintertime is Still Poop Pick-up Time

Once the cold weather hits & snow is on the ground, it's still as important as ever to pick up after your pets. Just because your dog's waste may be frozen, it still contains bacteria that threaten the health of animals and people, especially children.



There's nothing fun about picking up after your dog in the freezing cold, but in the spring you'll be glad you did. Spring showers can carry the waste directly into nearby streams and creeks without being treated at wastewater treatment facilities. This water then becomes cloudy and green — unattractive for swimming, boating and fishing. Excess nutrients are a major cause of water quality decline. When pet waste is washed into lakes and streams, the waste decays, using up oxygen and sometimes releasing ammonia. Low oxygen levels and ammonia combined with warm temperatures can kill fish and other aquatic life.

Preventing water pollution can be as simple as remembering to take along a plastic bag or pooper scooper when you walk your dog. Pet waste contains nutrients that encourage excess weed and algae growth. For both “quality of life” and public health reasons, many communities actually have laws requiring anyone taking their animal off of their property to immediately clean up the waste after the pet relieves itself. Your choices once you have picked up the waste include:

- Flush it down the toilet so the septic system or sewage treatment plant will treat it in the same manner as human waste. **DO NOT** flush kitty litter.
- Put it in the trash. This is less effective, as waste that ends up in a landfill may still cause pollution problems. For this reason, putting animal waste in the trash is actually against the law in some communities.

Source: WSB & Associates, Inc.