

Want additional information?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

<http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/>

The California State Water Resources Board provides an “Erase the Waste” idea toolbox for local communities and residents.

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/outreach/erase_waste/

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board implements policies and laws to ensure a healthy aquatic habitat, proper land management, and clean groundwater for the Central Coast.

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/>

San Luis Obispo County provides information on countywide stormwater pollution prevention.

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/pw/stormwater>

To speak to an individual directly about City policies and procedures for stormwater pollution prevention, please contact Atascadero City Hall.

If you notice any individual disposing of pet waste in a manner than could affect the water quality or environmental health of Atascadero and surrounding Central Coast communities, please contact the Department of Public Works at 805.461.5000.



City of Atascadero

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Pet Waste

Stormwater Pollution Prevention



**A pet owner's guide to
protecting the water quality in
and around Atascadero!**

What is stormwater pollution?

Stormwater is untreated water that flows into the Salinas River, Atascadero Creek, Atascadero Lake and surrounding waterbodies. Many of these sources drain into the Pacific Ocean; the polluted water may be significant enough to cause beach closures along the Central Coast.



Source: City of Atascadero

It is important to understand that it is unlawful to allow or cause the migration of pollutants (pet waste included) into the riparian corridors in the City of Atascadero (AMC 5-8.02).

Pet waste is a major contributor but is often overlooked as a cause of stormwater pollution. Runoff washes bacteria from pet waste into the untreated waterbodies. Bacteria dissolves much of the oxygen in the water depleting essential oxygen supplies for fish and other aquatic life. Furthermore, decomposed pet waste contributes to the growth of algae which negatively affects fishing, swimming and even drinking.

**Keep our water
clean and safe!**

How does this affect me?

Bacteria and other pathogens from pet waste can be harmful to humans by introducing numerous diseases and parasites, such as:

- **Campylobacteriosis.** A bacterial infection that frequently causes mild to severe diarrhea in humans. It is often accompanied by a fever.
- **Cryptosporidium.** A gastrointestinal disease accompanied by diarrhea, vomiting, dehydration and fever. It may last up to two weeks or occur intermittently for up to a month.
- **Salmonellosis.** This is the most common infection transmitted to humans. Symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, muscle aches and headaches.
- **Toxocariasis.** Caused by larvae of parasitic worms found in dogs and cats. Typically affects young children with symptoms that may include fever, coughing, enlarged lymph nodes, vision problems such as swelling around the eyes or decreased vision and other irritants.
- **Toxoplasmosis.** Contracted by a parasite found in cat waste. Most individuals experience flu-like symptoms. Serious complications may occur for individuals with suppressed immune systems or infants born from infected women.
- Tapeworms and other parasitic worms can also be transferred to humans via pet waste causing fever, weakness, loss of appetite, abdominal pain and diarrhea.

So, what can I do?

There are many steps you can take to help prevent stormwater pollution from pet waste. Individual actions can have a large effect when practiced by the majority. The extra effort to “scoop the poop” can go a long way in maintaining high water quality and keeping our Central Coast waterbodies clean and safe. Follow these recommendations to do your part in maintaining the water quality in and around Atascadero.

- Pick up the pet waste with a disposable bag or newspaper sleeve. Be sure to dispose of this in the trash.
- Pet waste can be disposed of by flushing it down the toilet (without the disposable bag or newspaper sleeve, of course).
- Used cat litter, however, should not be flushed down the toilet. It should be disposed of in the trash.
- Composting is okay as long as the compost is not used for food gardens or in an area that will drain into any waterbodies.
- Do not dispose of pet waste in any waterbodies, dry creek beds, or storm drains.
- No poop is too small to scoop!



Source: Flickr user "pink sherbet"