10 TIPS FOR DOGS

Dog waste contains many types of bacteria, parasites, and nutrients that degrade water quality and adversely impact human health. One gram of dog waste on average can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria. Collect and dispose pet waste appropriately; it is required by law and helps keep harmful bacteria out of our waterways.

1. Scoop the poop.
Dispose wrapped waste in the trash or flush unwrapped waste down a toilet. Flushing is preferred, as it goes to a wastewater treatment facility. You can also invest in a pet waste digester that acts as an environmentally-friendly doggy septic tank.

2. Never leave your bag behind. Always properly dispose of your pet's waste, whether that means taking it home or using a nearby trash can. Never throw a dog waste bag into a stormwater drain or in a brush pile.

3. Ice melting products can harm your pet. These salt-containing chemicals can also contaminate local water bodies. Use pet-friendly and salt-free ice melts and use only recommended quantities. Protect your dog's paws and wash them regularly.

4. Chemical fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides used for lawn care have been shown to increase the risk of certain cancers in pets. Use natural lawn-care products or products that are least toxic. See COA's *10 Tips for Lawn and Garden*.

5. Consumer power. Buy earth-friendly pet food in bulk and in recyclable or biodegradable packaging. Research to ensure your dog's food is sustainably harvested. When buying toys or bedding look for products made from recycled materials.

6. Upcycle household materials. Use old blankets and towels as beds; convert old socks and leashes into toys. Be creative but also keep your dog's safety in mind.

7. Keep a tight leash. To save wildlife keep your dog on a leash. Check the leash ordinance in your municipality to make sure you and your dog are obeying the law.

8. Keep your pet squeaky green and clean. Bathe your pet indoors to prevent runoff into your local waterway. Wash with biodegradable or sulfate-free and phosphate-free products.

9. Flee the use of chemicals. Consult with a veterinarian for safe flea and tick treatments.

10. Join the Sandy Paws Walk Fur Clean Water. Participating dogs and their owners can protect waterways. Visit COAsandypaws.org to learn more.

Nonpoint source or "pointless" pollution is the #1 cause of coastal water pollution resulting from stormwater runoff that carries litter, pet waste, fertilizers, pesticides, soil, and waste from leaky sewage systems into waterways. Every time it rains, polluted stormwater travels to the nearest storm drain or waterbody that ultimately drains to the ocean. People can easily become the solution to pollution. By making small changes we can make our ocean fishable, swimmable, and healthy.

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