A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO WATERSHED FRIENDLY PET CARE

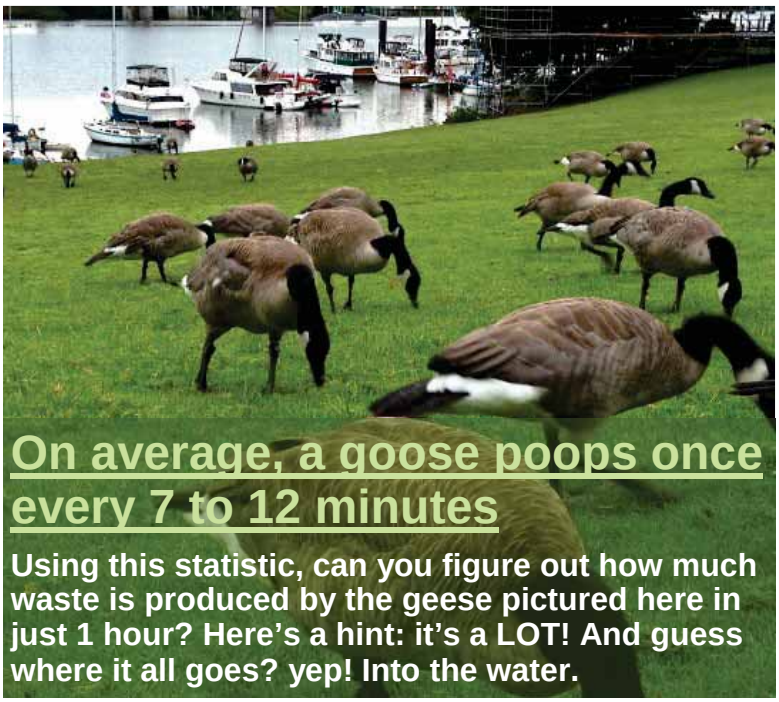
CLINTON RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

Animal waste when left on the ground is not only a terrible surprise for the bottom of your shoe, it is also a source of bacteria that is harmful to human health. When it rains, stormwater runoff from lawns and sidewalks carries this animal waste—full of harmful bacteria—into our stormdrains and out to our rivers and lakes! Here are some very simple things you can do to help protect our freshwaters and beaches from this contamination.

HOW CAN I KEEP HARMFUL BACTERIA OUT OF OUR LAKES, RIVERS AND BEACHES?

- **Dispose of it Promptly and Properly**—whether in your yard or on a walk, promptly dispose of your pet's waste in the trash
- **Pick up before lawn watering**—pick up after your pets before watering your yard or cleaning patios or driveways. Don't use a hose to clean pet waste off driveways or sidewalks
- **Share the message**—When at a dog park, community meeting, or talking with your friends, spread the word about the positive impact picking up after your pet can have on water quality
- **Don't treat ducks and geese as pets**—feeding ducks and geese may seem harmless but is actually a nuisance to people and harmful to our water. Feeding waterfowl causes them to become dependent on humans, creates high populations, which increases the amount of waste produced and pollutes our water and beaches with harmful bacteria.

EFFECTS OF ANIMAL WASTE ON WATER QUALITY



On average, a goose poops once every 7 to 12 minutes

Using this statistic, can you figure out how much waste is produced by the geese pictured here in just 1 hour? Here's a hint: it's a LOT! And guess where it all goes? yep! Into the water.

Waste from warm blooded animals also contains a bacteria that is harmful to human health—**E.coli bacteria**. When we feed geese and other waterfowl, we are not only telling them that the park or beach we're sitting at is a source of food, but also that they are welcome to stay. This encourages population growth and as a result: more poop! If we do the math for how much waste is produced in just 1 hour by the geese in the above picture, we will find that it is a lot of waste! When this waste is washed into the rivers and streams, a flood of this harmful bacteria is added causing unsafe conditions for water recreation like swimming and boating.

For more information, please contact CRWC

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Animal waste contains nutrients that encourage excess plant growth. This is why cow manure is such a valuable fertilizer when beginning your garden! However, when large volumes of waste are washed into the lakes and streams, excessive amounts of nutrients are added to the aquatic system causing unwanted and sometimes toxic algal blooms which are hazardous to the health of humans and other animals.