

# WHO WE ARE

## ► MISSION STATEMENT

The Stormwater Environmental Team is ultimately focused on protecting and improving the quality of local bodies of water. This is done by implementing flood control systems, water monitoring, and enforcing water-friendly construction practices that follow Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards. Keeping environmental issues in mind, the division strives to keep the city's water safe for recreation as well as usage at home.

## VALUES

Stormwater pollution is one of the greatest threats to Rockford's creeks and rivers. Clean water means safe drinking water, places for recreation, commercial opportunities, healthy wildlife habitats, and adds beauty to the landscape. Rain washes pollution from streets, parking lots and lawns into storm sewers and drainage ditches then directly to our streams, rivers and ultimately, the ocean.

# CONTACT US



425 EAST STATE STREET  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS 61104  
PHONE: 779-348-7175  
[WWW.ROCKFORDIL.GOV](http://WWW.ROCKFORDIL.GOV)



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# PET WASTE & WATER QUALITY



PROTECTING AND IMPROVING  
THE QUALITY OF LOCAL  
BODIES OF WATER

## IS YOUR PET POLLUTING OUR WATER?

Pollution from pet waste provides a very serious threat to our environment. Although it is not the most noticeable form of pollution, animal waste left on the ground can be washed into storm drains from rain and melting snow and ice. Once it has been washed into storm drains, the waste flows to rivers, lakes, oceans and even drinking water. With its high concentrations of bacteria and disease causing microorganisms, animal waste poses a serious pollution threat to everyone within the community.

According to the City of Rockford's Code of Ordinances, pet owners are required to properly and immediately dispose of any pet waste deposited on any public or private property not owned or possessed by that person.

## CONSIDER THIS

According to the American Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA), there are approximately 38,500 dogs in Rockford.

A dog drops an average of  $\frac{3}{4}$  pounds of waste daily. That means approximately 28,000 pounds of dog waste is generated in Rockford each day!

## DID YOU KNOW

When pet waste is washed into lakes, streams, or rivers, the waste decays, using up oxygen and releasing ammonia. Low oxygen levels and ammonia, combined with warm water temperatures, can kill fish and other aquatic life.

Pet waste also contains nutrients that encourage algae and weed growth. Nutrient loaded waters can become cloudy, green and unattractive for swimming, boating and fishing.

Pet waste also carries diseases and bacteria, which are unsafe for humans. These diseases include:

- **Salmonellosis** – the most common bacterial infection transmitted from animals to humans. Symptoms include headaches, fever, muscle aches, vomiting and diarrhea.
- **Campylobacteriosis** – a bacterial infection which includes diarrhea in humans.
- **Coliform Bacteria** - a single gram of canine feces contains more than 20 million coliform bacteria. Symptoms can include: diarrhea, cramps and kidney issues in humans.

When it rains, bacteria from animal waste can wash directly into storm drains and drainage ditches and eventually into our waterways.



## WHY CARE ABOUT CLEAN WATER?

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## CLEANING UP AFTER YOUR PET

- Use a scooper, bag or shovel to pick up pet waste. Place waste in a bag and seal it before placing it in the trash.
- Waste from cats should also be contained. Provide covered litter boxes for outdoor cats and dispose of cat litter properly. DO NOT flush kitty litter down the toilet.
- DO NOT compost or dump pet waste into storm drains or ditches.