

Watershed Protection Tips For Pet and Horse Owners

WHAT IS A WATERSHED & WHY IS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

A watershed is the land area that drains stormwater into streams, rivers, or other bodies of water. The storm drain system consists of a network of gutters, pipes, and open channels designed to manage flooding by directing untreated stormwater away from our communities. The untreated stormwater can be harmful to our local environment and aquatic life.

HOW DOES POOL DISCHARGE AFFECT THE WATERSHED?

Water treated with chemicals such as chlorine, bromine and salt enters surface waters, into local water, and is toxic to wildlife and fish. Pools, hot tubs and fountains often use chemically treated water; however, most of the chemically treated water discharged into storm drain systems, and ultimately water bodies, is from residential swimming pools. The City of Hidden Hills prohibits pool discharge into streets; storm drains or creeks. Pool water should be discharged directly to a sewer.

1. Prepare the Pool Water

- Swimming pool and spa water must be de-chlorinated or de-brominated using holding time, aeration, and/or sodium thiosulfate. Chlorine residual in the discharge shall not exceed 0.1 mg/L.
- Swimming pool discharge shall not contain any detergents, wastes, or algaecides, or any other chemicals including salts from saltwater pools.
- Balance pH: Ensure the water's pH level is between 6.5 and 8.5 standard units.



2. Determine the Drainage Method

- Storm Drain System: Notify the City at least 72 hours prior to a planned discharge for discharges of 100,000 gallons or more.
- Landscaping: It is recommended to drain water gradually into landscaped areas on your property, as long as it doesn't cause erosion or runoff onto neighboring properties.
- Volume control: Swimming pool discharges shall be volumetrically and velocity controlled to promote evaporation and/or infiltration.

3. Follow Best Management Practices

- For discharges of 100,000 gallons or more, immediately prior to discharge, inspect and clean out of all pre-existing trash and debris in the discharge pathway and the storm drain inlet to which the discharge is directed to.
- Discharges of cleaning wastewater and filter backwash are only allowed if authorized by a separate National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit.

Pool Drainage Guidelines

HOW DOES PET WASTE AFFECT THE WATERSHED?

Every time runoff occurs from events such as rain or over irrigation, accumulated and improperly disposed of pet waste can potentially wash into storm drains and flow directly into our streams, lakes and the ocean. Pet waste runoff includes bacteria and parasites that threaten the health of both people and wildlife.



Disposing Pet Waste Properly

- Pick up pet waste daily from your yard. Pet waste is not a safe fertilizer in your yard or in the watershed.
- When you walk your pet, always carry disposable bags to pick up and dispose of waste properly.
- Dog waste should be disposed of in the trash by being wrapped carefully in a sealed bag to prevent spilling during collection.
- Cat waste, including cat litter, should be disposed of in the trash by being wrapped carefully in a sealed bag to prevent spilling during collection. Do not mix cat waste or used litter into your garden soil.

Horse Manure Management

- Dispose and manage manure daily.
- Dispose of the manure in a sturdy and insect-resistant trash/waste bin.
- Store all containers or stockpiled horse waste on an impervious surface, concrete pad, or plastic tarp.
- In rain events manure should be covered with tarps to prevent runoff of pollutants.

How to turn Manure into Compost

You can turn horse manure into compost for personal use in your yard or donate to a local nursery. However, it is important to follow proper composting procedures as improper management can result in health hazard for you, your animals and your garden. Below are tips on how to turn manure into compost:

1. Gather horse manure, straw bedding, and nitrogen-rich materials (i.e., grass clippings and carbon-rich materials like leaves and sawdust).
2. Mix these materials together in a pile, ensuring the carbon-rich and nitrogen-rich materials are evenly distributed.
3. Using a garden hose, moisten the pile until it is damp but not saturated.
4. Turn the pile every few days to ensure aeration and to speed up the composting process. Be aware of safe composting measures due to stockpiled manure's ability to self-combust if not aerated.
5. Monitor the temperature of the pile, as a high temperature (usually ranging around 130°-140°) indicates that the composting process is happening as expected. Continue to do this, as composting manure takes an average of around 6 months.