

What is a Watershed?

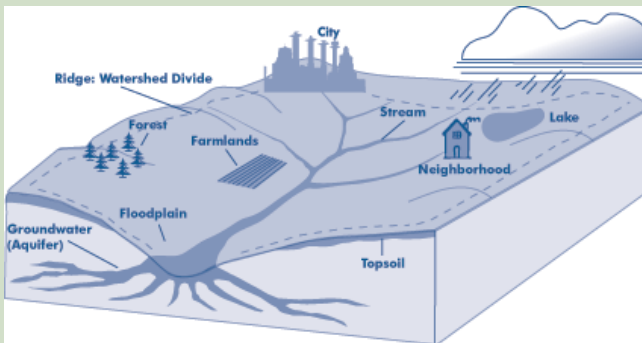
A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean.

Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. By protecting the health of our watersheds we can preserve and enhance the quality of life for Vincennes area residents.

What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow. It flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil, and through lawns and storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter and other pollutants. This water drains directly into nearby creeks, streams and rivers, without receiving treatment at sewage plants.

Polluted stormwater contaminates streams, rivers and lakes. It can kill or damage plants, fish and wildlife, while degrading the quality of our water.



A typical watershed system

Vincennes Water Utilities
Water ♪ Wastewater ♪ Stormwater

Remember...
Don't Trash
The Wabash

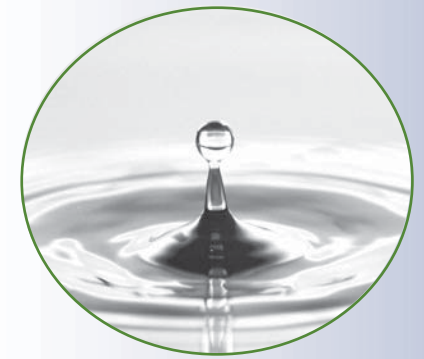
See something
Fishy?

Let us know by going
to vinutilities.com and
clicking the Report-a-
Polluter button at the
top of the page.



**Pick Up
After
Your Pet**

**If not
disposed of
properly,
pet waste
flows
directly into
waterways,
untreated!**



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Facts About Pet Waste

Every time it rains the potential exists for thousands of pounds of pet waste to wash down storm drains and into streams, rivers and lakes. If not disposed of properly, pet waste flows directly into nearby waterbodies without being treated at wastewater treatment facilities.



Pet waste can contain bacteria that threaten the health of animals and people, especially children. Pet waste also contains

nutrients that encourage excess weed and algae growth. This water then becomes cloudy and green — unattractive for swimming, boating and fishing. Excess nutrients are a major cause of water quality decline.

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

Clean Water. Healthy Life.

What's the Problem?

When pet waste is disposed of improperly, water quality isn't the only thing that suffers — your health may be at risk, too.

Pets, children playing outside, and adults that are gardening or performing lawn maintenance are most at risk for infection from some of the bacteria and parasites found in pet waste. Diseases that can be transmitted from pet waste include the following:

Salmonellosis: the most common bacterial infection transmitted to humans by other animals. Symptoms include fever, muscle aches, headache, vomiting and diarrhea.

Toxocariasis: roundworms usually transmitted from dogs to humans, often without noticeable symptoms, but may cause vision loss, a rash, fever or cough.

Toxoplasmosis: a parasite carried by cats that can cause birth defects if a woman becomes infected during pregnancy, and can also be a problem for people with depressed immune systems.

Many of our local waterways, including the Wabash River, do not meet state water quality bacteria standards for recreational use. Pet waste is one of the components of non-point source pollution that contributes to our water quality problems, and is one that each of us can help correct.

What Can You Do?

Pet waste should never enter storm drains and surface waters. Many local communities require pet owners to pick up after pets when away from their property, and to pick up waste from their property if it attracts flies and can pose a health risk.

Fortunately, there are actions pet owners can take to help keep our water clean:

- ❖ Pick up your dog's waste from your yard. It is not fertilizer.
- ❖ Carry disposable bags while walking your dog to pick up and dispose of waste properly. If you dispose of pet waste in the trash, wrap it care-fully to avoid spillage during collection.
- ❖ Cat litter should be bagged and placed in the trash. Never flush litter down the toilet.
- ❖ Avoid allowing your pet to do their business within 200 feet of a water body or storm drain.
- ❖ Use the pet waste disposal stations at local parks, along trails and in public places where people frequently walk their dogs.
- ❖ Never compost pet waste.

