

Pet Care and Animal Waste Disposal

A guide to improving water quality in Redford



Why be concerned?

Pet wastes contain nutrients and bacteria that can contribute pollution to the Rouge River, local streams and ponds when not disposed of properly. Waste left on sidewalks, streets or yards can be washed into storm drains and then into the river.

Excessive wastes from water fowl, like ducks and geese, due to humans feeding them too much also contribute pollution to the Rouge River and is a public health concern.

Pet care

High concentrations of pets and other animals (ducks and geese) coupled with an urban environment (large amounts of pavement) can contribute a large amount of pollution to the river. This occurs when animal waste left on paved surfaces enters the river either directly or through storm drains. Through proper waste management and reducing the overabundance of ducks and geese, bacteria and nutrient pollution from this source can be greatly reduced.



Cleaning up after your pet is a way to help protect the Rouge River and be a responsible neighbor. Pet waste left on sidewalks, streets or yards contains numerous pollutants such as nutrients and bacteria. These pollutants can easily be washed into nearby storm drains and the river. Discard your pet's waste by flushing it down the toilet or throwing it in the trash.

Other pet care tips:

- Wash your pet either in the house or on the lawn. Don't allow the bath water to enter into the storm drain.
- Use non-toxic alternatives to flea powders, if possible. After using a flea collar, dispose of the collar at a household hazardous waste collection site.



Don't feed the ducks

Feeding ducks near a calm body of water seems like a relaxing, harmless activity. However, feeding the ducks is not healthy for the ducks or the river. Feeding ducks, geese and other waterfowl has made them lazy and dependent on humans. Instead of migrating south or continuing their flight throughout the area in search of food and shelter, waterfowl stick close to places where they are fed. As a result, many local parks and ponds are overrun with waterfowl and duck and geese feces.

Another problem is the type of food we feed geese and ducks. Just like humans need certain food in their diet (vegetables and fruits), ducks and geese need certain types of food (not bread). In addition, like pet waste, waterfowl waste contributes nutrient and bacteria pollution to the Rouge River.

If you have a lot of geese congregating in your area pond, plant taller grasses or bushes around the edge. The geese will seek other places where there is lawn to the water's edge.

Just remember, a sufficient amount of food already exists within a lake or river for native waterfowl. For the sake of the river and the waterfowl, please don't feed ducks and geese.

Sources and Funding

- *Rouge River Repair Kit and Brochure, Wayne County Parks Division*
- *Guide preparation and distribution funded, in part, through a grant from the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project (# X995743-02).*