



Cute
Pooch.

But Is
His Poo

Polluting Your River?

A recent NJDEP survey shows that domestic animal, wildlife and human waste is washing into our rivers. It is raising the bacterial count to unacceptable levels for shellfish consumption in the Navesink River, and also making it less healthy for human recreation.

If you own or walk dogs, here are two simple things you can do to help:

- 1) Scoop your dog's poop whether on or off your property. If you leave it lying around, the next rainstorm will wash Fido's waste into the river and contribute to the problem. This is true even if you do not live near or on the river. The rain will wash the waste into the storm drains and those drains lead to the river.
- 2) If possible, dispose of the waste by flushing it down a toilet (don't flush the bag). Like human waste, dog waste contains harmful bacteria, which is why we process human waste, and which is why we should also process dog waste. If you can't get yourself to do that, throw it in the garbage. That's better than having it flow into the river.

American Littoral Society, 18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 1, Highlands, NJ 07732, 732-291-0055

Photo by John Voo

Fun Fecal Facts

It's unfortunate, but we humans and our best friends contribute to the pollution of our rivers. Here are some fascinating facts and a suggestion or two on how you can help clean our water.

Fact: The National Shellfish Sanitation Program fecal coliform limit for shellfish harvesting is 14 colony forming units (fecal coliforms) per 100 ml of water (3.4 ounces). We've begun exceeding that in places, which is why shellfishing in the Navesink River has been further restricted.

Fact: Dog poo is so high in nitrogen that it can burn your lawn and add to the jellyfish problem. When the nitrogen washes into the river it will feed weeds and algae. These organisms thrive on dog's droppings and eventually limit the amount of light that can penetrate the water. This lowers oxygen levels and will asphyxiate fish and other beneficial creatures, including the ones that might eat jellyfish polyps.

Fact: In 1991 the EPA put dog waste in the same category as herbicides, pesticides, oil, grease and toxic chemicals.

Fact: One gram of a dog's poo contains an estimated 23 million fecal coliforms. A dog can create an average of 1/2 pound of waste per day. That's about 227 grams. And your average pooch does this 365 days of the year.

So let's do a little math: **227 X 23,000,000 X 365 = 1,905,000,000,000 fecal coliforms per year.**

That's right, your average dog may put out two trillion fecal coliforms per year. And that's just one dog. Now imagine that it starts raining and those trillions of fecal coliforms from just one dog get washed into the river.

Fact: The EPA estimates that two or three day's worth of droppings from about 100 dogs would introduce enough bacteria to temporarily close a bay and all the watersheds around it to swimming and shell fishing.

So if you want to swim in the river, have clean and clear water, and eat the shellfish please:

**Keep your dog's poop out of the river.
Scoop it and flush it down the toilet.**

If we all do our part, we can clean up our rivers.



The American Littoral Society

Headquartered at Sandy Hook, the American Littoral Society has been protecting the coastal environment since 1961. For more information about the Society and its works, to join, donate, or volunteer, please go to www.littoralsociety.org, call 732-291-0055 or email us at info@littoralsociety.org