A-34: Animal Waste

Stormwater runoff (rainwater and snow melt) is the largest source of pollution to our lakes, streams and Puget Sound. King County requires businesses to implement measures to protect our shared waters. If the requirements below do not prevent pollution, additional measures are necessary.

The following best management practices (BMPs) apply to kennels, doggy daycare, catteries, veterinary clinics, fenced pens, recreational areas, multi-family properties and other locations where pets (not including livestock) are permitted.

For livestock BMPs see activity sheet A-35: Keeping Livestock in Stables, Pens, Pastures or Fields.

Required BMPs

- Regularly sweep and clean areas where animals are kept. Collect, bag, and dispose of droppings, uneaten food, and other potential stormwater pollutants.
- Put pet waste in a securely closed bag and deposit it in the trash. Do not place pet waste in yard waste containers because pet waste may carry diseases, and composting may not kill disease-causing organisms.
- Do not use pet waste as fertilizer. Harmful bacteria, worms, and parasites that can transmit disease can live in the soil for years even after the solid portion of the pet waste has dissolved.
- Do not hose down kennels or paved areas where animals are kept to the stormwater drainage system.
- Sweep and clean kennels and paved areas prior to washing the areas. Collect and dispose of the wash water to the sanitary sewer system or infiltrate the wash water into grass or gravel if mild soaps or detergents are used. If floor stripping or disinfectant chemicals are used, the wash water must be hauled off-site for proper disposal (e.g., taken to a wastewater treatment facility).
- Bathe pets indoors or in a manner that wash water won't be discharged to the stormwater drainage system or surface waters.
- Install covered waste containers and provide waste collection service at designated dog exercise areas.

Supplemental BMPs

- Make sure there is vegetative cover or some other type of ground cover, such as mulch, if animals are kept in unpaved and uncovered areas in order to prevent erosion.
- Specially designed septic systems for kennels are commercially available and are recommended if the above BMPs are not adequate.

- Do not dispose of unused pet pharmaceuticals in a storm drain, in a toilet, or down a sink. For proper disposal refer to King County's Secure Medicine Return program, https://kingcountysecuremedicinereturn.org/ .
- Pet pesticides, such as flea prevention, cannot be disposed of at a medicine return drop-box. Pesticides should be taken to at a local hazardous waste drop-off location. Refer to www.hazwastehelp.org for guidelines and to find a drop-off location near you.

Required BMPs – Recreational Areas and Multi-Family Properties

- Post signs at recreation areas and multi-family properties (that allow pets) reminding residents and visitors to pick up after their pets.
- Carefully consider the placement of pet waste stations at recreation sites and near multi-family properties that allow pets. Choose locations convenient for dog walkers to pick up a bag at the start of their walk and locations for them to dispose of it at mid-walk or at the end of their walk.
- Check pet waste stations on a regular basis to keep pet waste bags stocked and disposal stations empty. Consider signage to keep regular trash out of pet waste disposal stations to avoid filling them too quickly. Make sure pet waste disposal stations have a cover to keep out water.
- At multi-family properties with roof-top dog runs, ensure that stormwater from the dog run is not discharged to the stormwater system. Check with the local jurisdiction regarding roof-top dog run connections to sanitary sewer.

Additional Information

- Potential pollutants can include: fecal coliform bacteria, nutrients, oxygen demanding substances, PCBs, and sediment.
- *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual*, Chapter 3: Commercial and Multifamily BMPs
    - A-8: Storage of Solid Waste and Food Waste (Including Cooking Grease)
    - A-35: Keeping Livestock in Stables, Pens, Pastures or Fields

For more information or assistance contact the King County Stormwater Services at 206–477–4811 and visit kingcounty.gov/stormwater.