

What You Can Do To Help (Cont.)

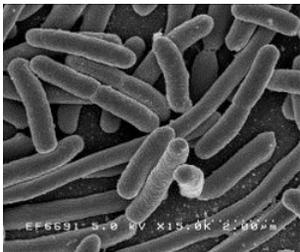
Create a Riparian buffer - Riparian is another word for the habitat, plants, and wildlife associated with the bank of a watercourse. If you live along a river, maintaining a healthy buffer consisting of native plants between your property and the water will reduce runoff full of E. Coli and many other pollutants.

Clean up after your pet - Pet waste causes a large percentage of E. Coli problems. Even if you're miles from a waterbody, the stormwater that washes over your dog's waste is going to travel further than just your backyard.

Be Responsible - When at the waterfront, use public restrooms, pack out your waste, or at the least bury your waste above the high water mark.

Don't feed the wild animals - Waterfowl become reliant on handouts and visit those locations frequently. As a result there are higher concentrations of feces in the area, creating a hot spot for E. Coli.

E. Coli



Pet Waste Affects Water Quality

Did you know pet waste is a health hazard and a stormwater pollutant?

Stormwater runoff can wash bacteria from pet waste directly into local creeks and waterways. Bacteria, parasites and viruses contained in pet waste are a health risk to other animals and people, especially children. Pollution from Pet Waste is easily prevented.

- Always clean up after your pet
- Use a scooper, bag or shovel to pick up pet waste.
- Double bag pet waste before disposing in trash
- Do not dispose of pet waste in a storm drain, catch basin or sewer.
- Do not use pet waste as a fertilizer or add to a compost pile

Sources

http://www.willametteriverkeeper.org/programs/ecoli/e_colimain.htm

<http://www.stormh2o.com/may-2008/bacterial-research-bmps.aspx>

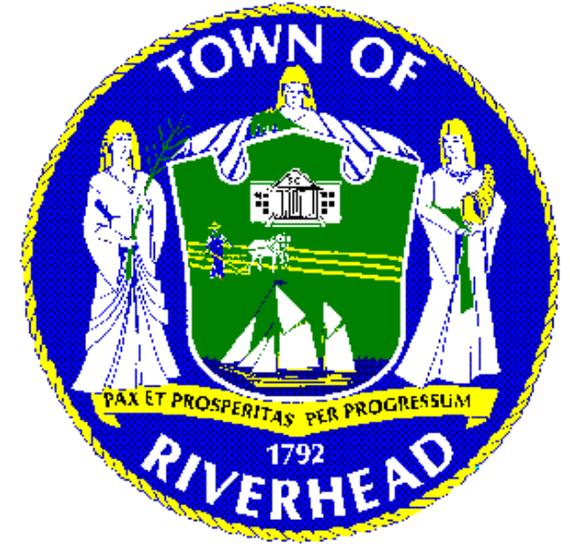
<http://www.startwithmiller.com/pdf/landandwater.pdf>

<http://www.stormh2o.com/march-april-2009/florida-tmdl-planning.aspx>

<http://www.stormh2o.com/september-2008/dead-zone-hypoxia.aspx>

http://www.erie.gov/environment/pdfs/septic_system_brochure.pdf

http://www.erie.gov/environment/pdfs/pet_waste.pdf



Waterborne Bacteria Prevention

Riverhead Department of Engineering

Drew Dillingham, P.E.

(631) 727-3200 ext. 604

Introduction

Imagine its Saturday and you wake up and decide that today is the perfect beach day. You make a bunch of sandwiches, pack your cooler and stuff all of your favorite beach gear into a huge bag. After you finish breakfast and get the kids dressed you all jump into the car excited for a fun day at the beach. The anticipation builds as the temperature rises and you just can't wait to jump out of the car and hop right into the nice cool water. But you pull into the beach parking lot and suddenly your heart sinks, there is a sign that says, "Beach Closed"! You think to yourself, how could this be, its beautiful out! Upon further inspection of the sign you discover that the beach is closed due to high levels of Fecal Coliform from pet and wildlife waste in the water. During 2006 alone, Fecal Coliform was responsible for 37% of Suffolk County Beach closings! This situation could happen at anytime. Keep reading to find out more about these pollutants and how to reduce them.



About Stormwater Pollution

Fecal Coliform and E. Coli are two of the most abundant bacteria polluting our rivers, lakes, and bays. As mentioned earlier, Fecal Coliform is the technical term for either pet waste or sanitary waste that enters the storm water system primarily through storm drains and ends up being washed into local bodies of water.



Fecal Coliform

E. Coli is another form of bacteria that is abundantly found in water bodies. E. Coli belongs to the Fecal Coliform family of bacteria and is consistently monitored in the lakes, rivers, and beaches in the area. Canadian Geese are an example of a contributor of E. Coli to our water bodies through the massive amount of feces that are deposited into our water bodies daily.

Fecal Coliform Infected Stream



What You Can Do To Help

Even though Riverhead Town is going to great lengths to solve the E. Coli and Fecal Coliform problems through their MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) program, there are a number of things that the homeowner can do to help.

Disconnect your downspout and manage your storm water on site - During a rain event it's possible for the Town's storm system to become overloaded due to massive amounts of runoff coming from homes. If an overflow occurs the system may pick up large amounts of debris and waste such as animal feces on the side of the road. In order to reduce the possibility of an overflow the homeowner could install Rain Barrels or a Rain Garden to catch and treat their runoff. By doing so hundreds of gallons of water are kept out of the catch basins and ultimately the storm water system. If you would like to learn more about these alternatives, Riverhead Town Engineering Department has published a pamphlet in regards to multiple ways to reduce your storm water runoff.

