

# YOU CAN HELP

## BY PICKING UP AFTER YOUR POOCH

### **CLEANING UP AFTER YOUR PET**

Picking up after your pet can be a stinky job, but someone has to do it. As a pet owner, that responsibility lies with you. There are many reasons why removing pet waste is important, it is not only the neighborly thing to do, but it is also the environmentally sensitive thing to do. Contrary to popular belief, pet waste is not a fertilizer and does not provide any benefit to the soil.

### **WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS?**

Pet feces can be catastrophic to the local water table, contaminating nearby ponds, lakes, rivers and drinking water. When feces is allowed to remain on the soil for long periods, rainstorms will begin to dilute and break apart the feces and slowly spread the bacteria or other contaminants into local water sources. If your yard happens to hold water for extended periods of time, the problem may be amplified. Excess nutrients and organic matter in pet waste can cause algae blooms that block sunlight and kill underwater vegetation. Decaying pet waste uses up oxygen in the water that fish and other aquatic species rely on to live.

### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS?**

Dog feces may contain parvovirus, whipworms, hookworms, roundworms, threadworms, campylobacteriosis, giardia, and coccidia. If left unattended, these parasites will contaminate the water, soil and can even cause infection in both pets and humans (especially children). The microscopic Hookworm larvae can be passed to another pet or person directly through the skin or by accidental ingestion, as can other bacteria.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

- Always clean up after your pets.
- Never dispose of pet waste down a storm drain.
- Bag dog waste and place it in a trash receptacle.
- Flush pet waste down the toilet.
- Encourage other pet owners to be responsible.

The City of Satellite Beach, in conjunction with the FDEP and EPA, has spent significant resources treating stormwater runoff in an effort to remove nutrients from entering the Indian River Lagoon. As residents, there are a number of things you can do to assist in this ongoing effort. Picking up after your pet is just one of the actions you can take to help maintain a healthy Lagoon. If you have questions regarding other measures you can take to help keep our Lagoon free of pollutants, please contact the Public Works Department at 777-2309 or via e-mail at [apotter@satellitebeach.org](mailto:apotter@satellitebeach.org)