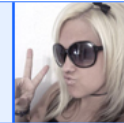


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Three good reasons to pick up after your dog

4:46 PM, December 11, 2008

There are more than enough reasons to clean up after your dog; remaining on good terms with the neighbors has always been mine. But the city of Los Angeles is encouraging pet owners to remember some even more important reasons to pick up pet waste with the **Stormwater Program**:



- Both **canine distemper** and **parvovirus** are highly contagious and can be spread through pet waste.
- A nasty protozoan called **Giardia** -- which can make both you *and* your dog sick -- is also spread through waste. A recent Giardia outbreak at an L.A. city shelter infected between 30 and 40 dogs (fortunately, quick treatment allowed them to make full recoveries). So how can future outbreaks be avoided? "Prevention is based on good sanitation practices to prevent ingestion of any feces, contaminated food, water or objects," said Dr. Steven Feldman of the L.A. Department of Animal Services. "It is important to dispose of waste materials in such a way that they cannot contaminate surface or ground water."
- Rain washes pet waste into storm drains, which lead to L.A.'s waterways -- and to the ocean. Bacteria can affect marine life, not to mention you when you go to the beach!

To learn more -- and to receive a free dispenser with doggie waste bags -- call (800) 974-9794 or visit the **Stormwater Program's pet tips website**.

--Lindsay Barnett

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