

Impacts of Feeding Canadian Geese and the Improper Disposal of Pet Waste

Did you know animal waste can be a health hazard and a stormwater pollutant?

Stormwater runoff can wash bacteria from animal waste directly into local rivers and waterways.

Bacteria, parasites and viruses contained in animal waste can be a health risk to other animals and people, especially children.

Pollution from animal waste is easily prevented. When it comes to feeding Canadian Geese, the common thought is that there is no harm being done and the Geese are helped by feeding them. That's if you consider helping the Geese to be changing their feeding habits, creating widespread disease among the local population, and starving the animals.

In reality feeding the Geese creates unhealthy habits and could actually destroy the animals by altering their digestive systems and affecting their migratory behavior.

What you can do to help

Even though the Town of New Canaan Public Works Department is going to great lengths to reduce the E.coli and Fecal Coliform pollutants through their MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) program, there are a number of things that the homeowner can do to help.

Don't feed the wild animals - Canadian Geese become reliant on handouts and visit those locations frequently. As a result there are higher concentrations of feces in the area, which in turn can create an E.coli hotspot and place a heavy burden on the ecosystem. The easiest and most effective measure is to refrain from feeding Canadian Geese

If you live along a river, maintaining a healthy buffer consisting of native plants between your property and the water will reduce runoff laden with possible animal pathogens and many other pollutants. By maintaining a 3ft or higher buffer of native plants along the waterfront, Canadian Geese are less likely to frequent your property.

Pet Waste Disposal

Pet waste can contribute up to 90% of E.coli loading in storm water runoff. Even if you're miles from a waterbody, the stormwater carrying bacteria from dog waste may very well find its way to a water body through gutter and storm piping.

Be Responsible - When at the waterfront, use public restrooms and pack out your waste. These measures will help keep the bacteria associated with feces out of the water.

- Always clean up after your pet.
- Use a Pooper Scooper, bag or shovel to pick up pet waste and dispose of properly.
- Double bag pet waste before disposing in trash.
- Do not dispose of pet waste in a storm drain, catch basin or storm sewer.

For more information see attached link:

http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325942&depNav_GID=1655