

Scooping To Prevent Poo-lluting

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GOAL

Bacterial pollution is the leading cause of water body impairment in South Carolina (SC). This has resulted in more than 350 impaired water bodies statewide. Pet waste is a significant non-point source contributor, transported by stormwater runoff into local waterways. Addressing routine pet waste disposal offers a simple, high-impact prevention strategy. The Pet Waste Wall Calendar: *IF YOUR DOG POOPS, PICK IT UP* was created to help reduce bacteria pollution in SC waterways by promoting proper pet waste disposal through an engaging, humorous, science-based educational outreach tool. The calendar was developed using materials established by the Carolina Clear Water Resources Team (CCWRT), a Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service (CUCES) program.



Image credit: SCDHEC 303(d) list impaired sites (2016)

OBJECTIVES

- 1** Increase public awareness of the link between pet waste pick up, stormwater runoff, and impaired water bodies in SC.
- 2** Encourage routine pet waste pickup, proper disposal, and participation in the Pet Waste Pledge to foster sustained behavior change.
- 3** Expand statewide engagement through strategic distribution to all 46 CUCES offices and key stakeholders.

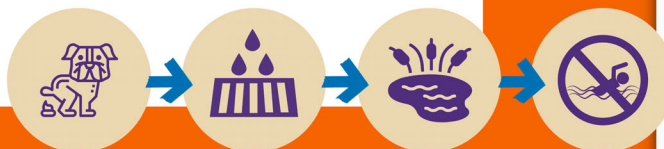
METHODS

Program Design

- Designed The Pet Waste Wall Calendar: *IF YOUR DOG POOPS, PICK IT UP*, combining humorous Agent contributed photos of dogs "in the act", paired with compelling science-based environmental "fun facts" to increase audience engagement and message retention.
- The calendar uses materials developed by the CCWRT to explain how pet waste contributes fecal coliform bacteria to stormwater runoff.
- Embedded a QR code linking to the CCWRT pet waste webpage for extended learning and pledge participation with contact information for Water Resource Agents statewide.

Distribution & Evaluation

- Distributed 350 printed 22" x 28" calendars statewide at the end of 2025 to all 46 county offices and to key stakeholders.
- Tracked engagement through recorded interactions across CUCES offices.



IMPACT

Reach & Engagement

2900 interactions across 46 CUCES offices

Additional exposure via stakeholders locations statewide

Environment Significance

- 1** dog produces ~340 grams of waste per day
- 7.8** billion grams of fecal coliform bacteria can be prevented from entering the environment with proper disposal
- >1** million pounds of dog waste generated daily statewide from ~1,431,360 dogs

Water Quality & Economics

- 350+** impaired waterbodies due to bacterial pollution in SC
- 100** dogs on a few days can contain enough bacteria to close a swimming or shellfishing area per USEPA
- \$16.6** billion annual beach tourism industry in SC can be significantly impacted by closures

Behavioral Change Potential

Proper Pet Waste Disposal:

- Reduces Bacterial Loading
- Protects recreational waters
- Safeguards drinking water supplies
- Supports shellfish harvesting
- Protects public health and property values

IF YOUR DOG POOPS, PICK IT UP! -2026-

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION **Carolina CLEAR**

Bacteria is the most frequently listed water pollutant in South Carolina. Bacteria in pet waste can negatively impact public health, water quality, recreation, and local economies when it is not disposed of properly.

Polluted waterways from excess bacteria and nutrients in pet waste may lead to closures of beaches, docks, parks, shellfish beds, & other recreational areas, and restrict swimming, boating, and fishing.

Over 1 million pounds of dog waste is deposited in SC every single day. Pet waste from dogs contains significantly more harmful bacteria than human, cow, or horse waste.

Untreated pet waste from dogs should NOT be used as fertilizer. It can contain bacteria and parasites, which can cause illness, and it can contain high levels of nitrogen, which can "burn" plants.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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30	31					

Be part of the solution to protect the water in South Carolina. Find out more here:

And contact your local Water Resources Agent:

ALBANY COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
ANDERSON COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
BLAKELY COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
CHARLESTON COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
CHESAPEAKE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
CLAY COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
COLLEGE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
DADE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
DAVENPORT COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
DEKALB COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
EDGEWATER COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
GEORGETOWN COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
GREENVILLE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
HANCOCK COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
HEADINGTON COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
JACKSON COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
JAMESHEARDE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
LAURENS COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
LINCOLN COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
LYONS COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
MAHON COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
MARLBOROUGH COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
MARSH COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
MICHAEL J. SMITH COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
MUSKOGEE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
NETLEY COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
NEWBERRY COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
OKCHEE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
ORANGE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
ORANGEBURG COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
PERDUE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
PICKENS COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
ROCK HILL COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
ROCKWELL COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
SPARTANBURG COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
SUMMER COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
TAYLOR COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
TIGER COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
WAGNER COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
WAYNE COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu
YAMHOUB COUNTY: Susan Lunt, lunt@clemsun.edu

How you can help!

- Clean up after your pet EVERY TIME. That includes both in the yard and on walks.
- Be prepared. ALWAYS BRING A BAG.
- Properly dispose of pet waste. Put it in the trash.

