

Pet Wastes and our Natural Resources



Natural Resource Services
Bernalillo County Public Works Division

***We work to reduce Stormwater Pollution
to keep our river clean.***



*Stormwater Runoff is rain or snow melt that runs off buildings, yards or hillsides, down driveways, streets and channels, to the Rio Grande. Along the way it picks up pollutants and the trash we leave behind. **Pet Waste can be a significant problem in the Rio Grande.** Pollution is best controlled at the source, in our own homes, businesses, parks, and cars, by our own good housekeeping.*

Pet waste is not like natural wildlife waste.

Commercial pet foods contain by-products and preservatives that are not part of the native environment, and do not break down quickly. Pet waste does not compare to wild animal wastes or even commercial fertilizers. It damages our natural environment including wildlife and native plants. It may also wash into streams and the Rio Grande causing more harm with excessive nutrients and bacteria.

Pet wastes carry diseases that can seriously harm wildlife and others.

In addition to canine diseases and parasites, our pets live so closely with us that they also carry many human diseases. Native wildlife has no natural immunity to these illnesses, and suffers much higher mortality and illness.

The population density of dogs is almost 100 times that of native wildlife in Bernalillo County. That's just too much waste for the trails and open spaces in Bernalillo County to absorb naturally.

In these years of unprecedented drought, our natural environment is already struggling to survive. Be a responsible citizen and a thoughtful pet owner.

POOP HAPPENS! JUST PICK IT UP AND MOVE ON.

CLEAN TRAILS, CLEAN STREAMS, CLEAN SHOES.

Please visit our website: www.bernco.gov/stormwater
or our partnership website: www.KeepTheRioGrand.org

You are the solution to Stormwater Pollution!

You and Your Dog in Open Spaces and Trails



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Bernalillo County strives to be an effective steward of county resources and a partner in building a high quality of life for county residents.

Recognizing that many people enjoy hiking with their dogs in the natural spaces of Bernalillo County, we do our best to provide that opportunity wherever possible. We must balance those recreational choices with protection of other citizens and our natural resources. ***For that reason Bernalillo County does require that dogs be leashed except in designated areas, and that dog owners clean up pet wastes.***

Dogs are safer on a leash. Your pet may become prey (food) for bears, coyotes, or other predators. A loose dog may also lead a predator back to you or others. Loose dogs are also more likely to fight with other dogs in an unfamiliar place.

Wildlife is safer when your dog is on a leash. Even a small dog may kill birds, squirrels, or other wildlife. Even if your dog does not kill, it may harass and exhaust wild animals. That stress may be the last straw for a sick or pregnant animal.

Other people are safer when your dog is on a leash. Even a friendly dog may frighten someone who is not a "dog person." And a friendly dog jumping up on a child or adult might knock them down, or worse, knock them off a narrow trail.

Diseases travel both directions. Dogs may carry both human and canine diseases to wildlife or other visitors. Dogs may also pick-up diseases such as rabies or plague from wildlife and bring them to your home and your family.

Dogs are already banned from most backcountry trails in our National Parks. Keep them on the trails in Bernalillo County by being a responsible pet owner.

Keep your dog on a leash. Keep dogs welcome on the trails.