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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keep Stormwater Clean by Scooping the Poop Protect Our Children and Pets

Pima County, Ariz. (June 19, 2017) –The monsoon rains are coming soon (we hope) which is a perfect time to remember why it is important to pick up after our pets. Pet waste can contain disease-carrying microorganisms and can transmit diseases to other pets, wildlife and even children.

How can a little pet poop end up contaminating our stormwater? There are thousands of dogs and cats depositing waste on the ground throughout our community. The waste from carnivores can be teeming with disease-carrying organisms such as bacteria, parasites, and viruses. Just one gram of dog poop can contain 23 million fecal coliform bacteria! If ingested, this type of bacteria can affect health causing cramps, diarrhea, intestinal illness, and urinary tract and kidney infections.

When it rains, the water picks up whatever contaminants are on the soil or in our streets and takes the pollution to washes and the desert where it can interfere with native plants and wildlife habitats. Children and dogs love to play in the stormwater and wildlife relies on it for their life cycle. By picking up after our pets, we can prevent E. coli and other organisms from negatively affecting the health of all who come in contact with the contaminated stormwater.

Pet waste contamination of stormwater is a problem with an easy solution:

- Set a good example by “scooping the poop” and properly disposing waste from your pets;
- Work with your neighbors to encourage responsible pet ownership; and
- Install plastic bag holders and bins for proper disposal around your neighborhood.

Here are other ways to help protect the quality of our stormwater:

- Fix leaky vehicles;
- Use copper-free or low-copper containing brake pads;
- Harvest rainwater on your property so it stays out of the dirty streets;
- Don’t be a litter bug and pick up litter when you see it;
- Dispose of household hazardous was properly;
- Apply pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer sparingly and to minimize runoff – or use more earth-friendly ways to reduce pests and grow healthy plants.

More information about protecting stormwater quality is available at the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality’s [Stormwater Management Program](#) or by calling (520) 724-7400.

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Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ) serves Pima County residents by protecting public health and the environment. PDEQ monitors air and water quality; provides hazardous and solid waste programs that ensures waste minimization and pollution prevention; assesses environmental compliance; processes environmental permits and plans; responds to public complaints and inquiries with investigations and enforcement; and reaches the community via public outreach, education, and citizens' assistance. Visit us at http://webcms.pima.gov/government/environmental_quality/ or follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/PimaDEQ>.