

# Does horse waste contribute to the problem?

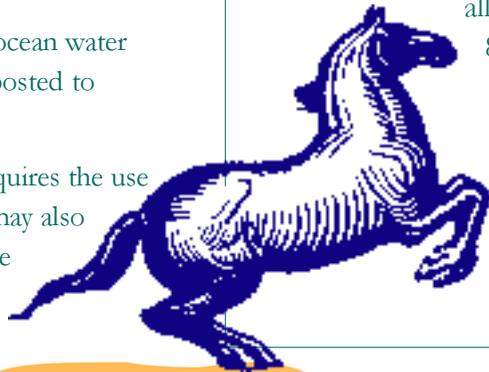
**Yes, if not properly managed.**

Horse manure contains nutrients that make great fertilizer, but in large quantity may cause problems for aquatic life in creeks, wetlands and the ocean. It also contains bacteria. Although it has never been proven that equine fecal matter causes human illness, it does contribute to the total bacteria count in the water which leads to beach postings.

When it rains, or sometimes during irrigation, horse waste left uncovered or stored improperly near creeks and storm drains can flow, untreated, directly to the ocean. As a result:

- Nutrients in horse waste fertilize aquatic plants; they grow at an unnaturally excessive rate and take oxygen away from other aquatic life, which then causes the aquatic life to die.
- Sediment in runoff from livestock facilities harms aquatic life by clogging the gills of fish, blocking sunlight, and raising water temperatures.
- When the bacterial level in ocean water gets too high, beaches are posted to protect the public.

Caring for horses sometimes requires the use of pesticides. These chemicals may also wash into creeks and flow to the ocean, harming aquatic life and people.



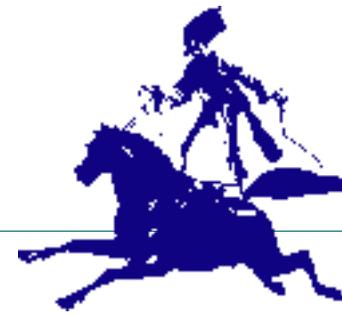
## Solutions...

### Planning Ahead

- Place barns, corrals and other high-use areas so that rain or irrigation will carry runoff away from the nearest creek. Surround the area with pasture, if possible.
- Direct runoff on your property so that it doesn't cross livestock areas.
- If possible, design diversion terraces that allow runoff to be filtered through vegetation before it enters a creek or storm drain.

### Grazing

- Divide grazing areas into 3 or more units of equal size and rotate animals.
- When grass is grazed down to 3 or 4 inches, move them to another section, allowing the grass to grow to 8 to 10 inches before allowing regrowth.
  - Keep animals away from wet fields, and indoors if possible, during rainfall.



### Clean-up and Storage

- Remove soiled bedding and manure at least 3 times per week from stalls and paddocks.
- Place it in sturdy, insect resistant, leak-proof containers:
  - Plastic garbage cans with lids
  - Fly-tight wooden or concrete storage sheds
  - Composters
  - Pits or trenches lined with an impermeable layer

### Then What?

- Marborg Industries collects and composts horse waste. Call Marborg at 963-1052 to arrange for a dumpster at your stable.
- Use the material to fertilize pastures, but **not just before or during a rainstorm.**

**Dumping *anything* into a creek, gutter or storm drain is ILLEGAL**

# Would you believe...?

## MYTH #1

**Runoff from streets and storm drains is treated at wastewater treatment plants.**

## FACT

Storm drain runoff in Santa Barbara County is not treated and goes directly into our creeks — what goes into the storm drain ends up at the beach. That is why it is important to insure that pollutants such as animal waste, automotive fluids, garbage and chemicals do not end up in storm drains.

## MYTH #2

**Most creek pollution comes from a few big polluters.**

## FACT

The well-known stories about environmental problems tend to focus on big, recognizable targets such as industrial factories, leaking toxic waste dumps, and oil spills. As a result, people often forget that the majority of water pollution comes from small sources — especially at the household level.

## MYTH #3

**The impact of one household doesn't really matter.**

## FACT

Although an individual home might contribute only minor amounts of pollution, the combined effect of an entire neighborhood or city is serious.

## MYTH #4

**Creek contamination and beach postings are usually caused by chemical pollution such as paints, solvents, and motor oils.**

## FACT

Chemical contamination is always a concern. Yet, bacterial contamination from animal waste, litter, leaking septic tanks, garbage, and green waste also threaten creeks, beaches, wildlife and your health. Beach postings are actually triggered by bacterial contamination.

# Want to know more?

Call **1-877-OUR-OCEAN** if you see

- illegal dumping
- pollution in a creek
- a clogged storm drain
- a pollutant spill near a gutter, storm drain or creek
- disposal of wastewater into a gutter or storm drain

## If you need to dispose of a pollutant:

- Used motor oil, call:  
Used Oil Hotline - 800-CLEANUP
- Hazardous waste, call:  
(Paint, paint thinner, garden chemicals, etc.)  
Community Environmental Council  
805-963-0583

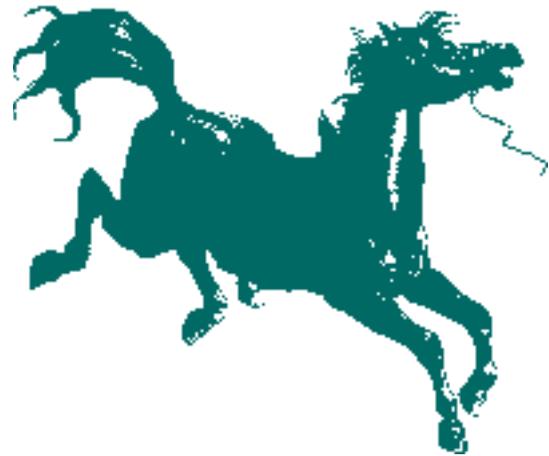
## For more information on clean water programs

- City of Santa Barbara Creek Restoration & Water Quality Improvement Program:  
805-897-2658  
[www.ci.santa-barbara.ca.us](http://www.ci.santa-barbara.ca.us)
- Santa Barbara County Project Clean Water:  
805-568-3440  
[www.co.santa-barbara.ca.us/project\\_cleanwater](http://www.co.santa-barbara.ca.us/project_cleanwater)



PROJECT  
CLEAN WATER

# Helpful Hints for Horse Owners



Part of a unified community effort to clean up Santa Barbara County's creeks and beaches



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# So what's the problem?

## Our ocean and creeks are polluted

Bacteria and other types of pollution have been found in local creeks and the ocean. Ongoing contamination of these waters has resulted in beach and creek closures, and unconfirmed reports of illness from contact with these polluted waters. Remember, everything that flows into a storm drain or creek ends up in the ocean without being treated.

## Our community is working to solve this problem

Project Clean Water is a coalition of nonprofit organizations, businesses, government agencies and concerned citizens. All of these groups have these goals: to improve water quality in our creeks and the ocean, to promote public health and to protect the quality of life in Santa Barbara County for everyone.

## You can help

By implementing the solutions in this pamphlet, you can take part in protecting and improving the water quality of local creeks and making our beaches safe again.

