



Clean Paddock Practices

The storm drain system is a vast network of gutters, pipes and open channels designed for flood control, which directs runoff – untreated – from the watershed straight into the waterways. While manure and the sediment washed from barns, pastures and paddocks are organic, they also contain high concentrations of chemicals, especially nitrogen and phosphorous, and pathogens such as bacteria, parasites and viruses. When part of storm water runoff, these can be harmful to both human and watershed health.



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Watershed Protection Tips for Horse Owners



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Watershed Protection Tips for Horse Owners



What is our watershed?

Our watershed is the total land area, including horse paddocks and facilities, from which storm water drains into a stream, river, or body of water. In Ventura County, our primary watersheds drain into the Ventura and Santa Clara Rivers, Malibu and Calleguas Creeks and the bays and estuaries which all flow into the Pacific Ocean.

A clean and healthy watershed is invaluable to the wellbeing and beauty of our community. Simple precautions can protect and preserve our watershed, streams, lakes, beaches, and the ocean.



Runoff Management

The goals of runoff management are to reduce the flow of pollutants entering local waterways and prevent the erosion caused by uncontrolled runoff. Follow these best management practices to help keep our watershed clean for future generations of equestrians.

Facility Design & Location

Assessing and adjusting facility location can limit the potential for polluted storm water runoff.

- Build corrals and barns in a location that drains away from the nearest creek or stream.
- Locate structures on higher ground, surrounded by pasture to act as a natural filtration system (biofilter).
- Direct roof runoff to vegetated pasture areas and away from bare ground and manure storage areas.
- Inspect and clean water sources daily to avoid overflow, algae, and mosquito larvae.
- Maintain a vegetative buffer strip between paddocks and pastures to absorb and filter runoff.



- Prevent wash area water from flowing into storm drains or waterways.
- Install a shut-off nozzle at the end of your hose.
- Drain wash water away to a low-gradient buffer location or vegetated area.
- If you must use grooming products and pesticides, follow the instructions using only recommended amounts or less.
- Use plain water to rinse horses and avoid using soap when possible.

Manure Management

Proper manure management can both prevent pollutants from entering waterways and improve livestock health.

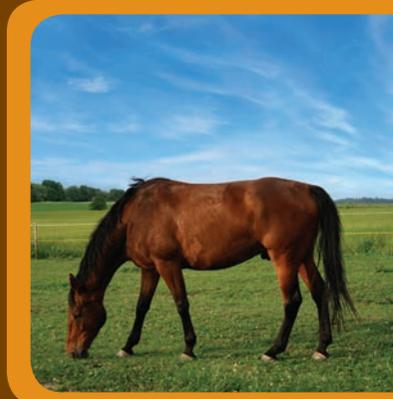
- Collect and remove soiled bedding and manure from stalls, pens and corrals at least once daily.
- Deposit waste in sturdy, insect-resistant and seepage-free waste containers.
- Store containers or stockpiled horse waste on an impervious surface, concrete pad or plastic tarp.
- Cover manure with tarps during rain events to prevent runoff of pollutants.
- Arrange for weekly manure pick-up service, or
- Compost waste for personal use or donate to community gardens or nurseries.



Turnout & Grazing Practices

Maintaining a healthy watershed means developing a grazing system that benefits both the quality of the runoff water and the pasture.

- Subdivide large pastures into smaller ones and develop a rotational grazing schedule.
- Allow grass to grow six inches high before grazing and remove animals when three inches remains.
- Protect dirt areas with loose hay or plant fast-growing grasses.
- Keep livestock out of wet pastures to prevent erosion.
- Feed animals indoors during heavy rains to keep manure under cover and less subject to runoff.



Wash Rack Design

Ideally, if permitted and possible, horse wash areas should be connected to the sanitary sewer system. Otherwise, have drainage flow through a biofilter such as a vegetated area or buffer strip.



The Watershed Should Only Shed Water

The Community for a Clean Watershed program was established to protect Ventura County watersheds by preventing storm water pollution.

For more information or to contact your community's participating agency, visit cleanwatershed.org