



# Oak Creek Watershed

One of Arizona's Greatest Treasures

## OAK CREEK and YOU

Fecal contamination in Oak Creek is harmful to wildlife and your health. Always use a public restroom and pack out your trash — diapers (pee-yoo), pet waste (yuck), and any other items you bring to the creek!



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Oak Creek flows for 50+ miles before combining with the Verde River. The Verde River flows into the Salt River. Farming, business, and people rely on these rivers for their needs.

Oak Creek and the Verde River supply drinking water to people living along its course all the way to the Phoenix metro area.

## Would you want to swim or wade downstream of someone's dirty diaper or poop left near the creek?

That poop and toilet paper near the creek contains bacteria that can find their way to the creek during storms (eww).

Just one diaper can contaminate the creek and pose a risk to your health!

## TRASH YOUR TRASH How long does it last?

Food waste = 1 year

Fecal matter = 1 year

One gram of feces (about the size of a raisin) contains **billions** of bacteria that can make you sick.

Cigarette butts = 5 years

Plastic bags = 20 years

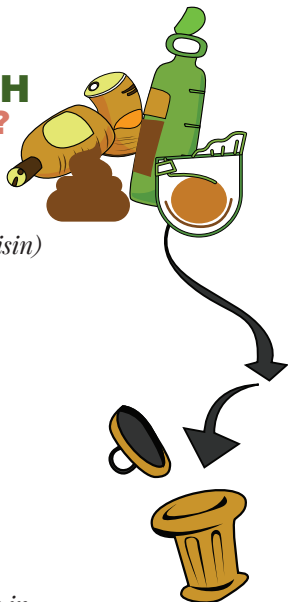
Aluminum cans = 200 years

Diapers = 500 years

Plastic bottles = 1,000 years

Glass = 1,000,000 years

One reason why it's illegal to have glass in Oak Creek Canyon.



## LEAVE NO TRACE

### Plan Ahead and Prepare

Always plan for rough terrain. Anticipate that trash cans and bathrooms may not be available.

### Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Social trails can erode and impair water quality. Using them can be dangerous and degrade habitat. Use established trails only.

### Dispose of Waste Properly

Always bring a trash bag and pet waste bags and pack out what you pack in to protect water quality. Leave the area nicer than you found it. Only picnic at established sites. Never leave food waste near the creek.

### Minimize Campfire Impacts

Always follow fire restrictions; never bring grills or BBQs to the creek or make your own fire pit. Dispose of cigarettes properly. Wildfire is always a risk.

### Respect Wildlife

Threatened and endangered wildlife depend on Oak Creek as habitat. As more and more habitat is lost, more species will depend on this area to survive. Do your part – respect wildlife and their home!

### Stay on the trail.

### Pack out your trash.

### Keep dogs on a leash.

### Please be respectful.

## HELP US PROTECT YOUR WATER

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(928) 978-2515  
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