

Whether your business or home is two blocks or 20 miles from the water, it has connections to the Monterey Bay. Car washing creates waste that can be harmful if discarded improperly. If proper control measures are not taken, wash sites can generate wastewater that is harmful to the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary.

The good news is that implementing the best environmental management practices detailed in this pamphlet can drastically reduce environmental impacts from car washing.



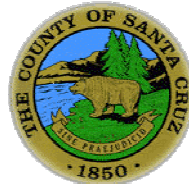
**LET ONLY RAIN
DOWN
THE STORM DRAIN**



Useful Resources

There are many companies that provide containment supplies for storm drain protection. They can usually be found on the internet. Before washing cars, check your inventory for the following:

- Pressure washer or hose attachment that restricts water flow when not in use
- Environmentally Friendly Detergents
- Water Containment Products (mats, berms)
- Water Reclamation Systems (vacuum pumps)



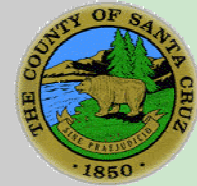
Environmentally Responsible Car Washing

For more information contact:

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County of Santa Cruz

Department of Public
Works

***Environmentally
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Car Washing***

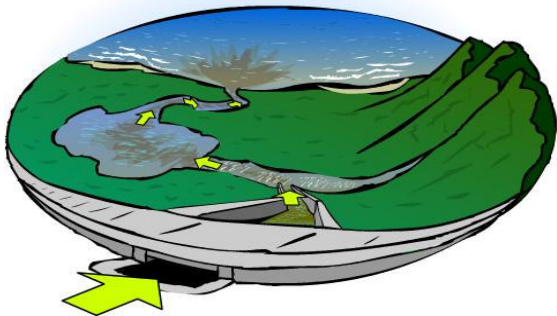


Storm Drains In Santa Cruz County

Storm drains are intended to carry only rain-water because they flow directly to rivers, creeks, and the Monterey Bay without treatment. When wastewater from car washing is discharged to a storm drain it can send pollutants such as grease, oil, automotive fluids, metal and detergents to waterways which can harm marine life and degrade our beaches. This is why Santa Cruz County code strictly prohibits wastewater generated from car washing from being discharged onto streets, gutters, storm drains or surface waters.

This pamphlet has been developed to help you manage wastes associated with car washing which will keep our local waterways free from harmful contaminants. Use this pamphlet as a tool to train employees on best management practices.

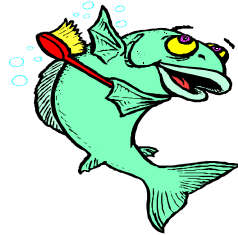
Storm Drains



Car Wash Wastewater

Solvents and Detergents

The products used to clean a car may be toxic to the environment. Never discharge vehicle wash waters to the street or storm drain. Use soaps that are phosphate-free and pH neutral. Check the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and use products that won't harm organic life (i.e. plants, flowers, landscape).



Even biodegradable soaps are toxic to many forms of aquatic life! Biodegradable soaps make contact with sensitive ecosystems before completely biodegrading.

Dirty Vehicles

- Dirt isn't the only thing that rinses off a sudsy vehicle. The combination of detergents, scrubbing and pressure washing may also strip the car of heavy metals, oil, grease and petroleum products. These contaminants can pollute waterways and ground water.



Best Environmental Management Practices

- Before washing, determine how the wastewater will be collected and disposed of.
- Use containment booms, containment pools, and storm drain covers to protect nearby storm drains.
- Collect pooled wash water with a shop vac. When the vac is full, pump the wastewater to the sewer via a sink, toilet or cleanout, or direct the water to landscape. Or pump the wastewater into a storage tank for later disposal.
- Wash vehicles on a flat, level surface composed of grass or gravel to restrict wash water migration.
- Use half the recommended amount of soap.
- Research closed-loop systems that recycle wastewater, and see if they are feasible for your business.
- Utilize low flow hose attachments.
- Empty wash buckets into a sink or toilet.
- Do not introduce any debris into the sewer that may cause a clog (i.e. dirt, gravel, twigs).
- Engine solvents, degreasers, and strongly acidic/basic cleaners may never be discharged to the sewer or storm drain.
- Wastewater from under a car's hood or undercarriage may never be discharged to the sewer or storm drain.

Look for less toxic soaps like those that have the "Green Seal" or "Design for the Environment" labels.



Look for the label!