

Car Washing Best Management Practices



Everyone should be aware that the discharge of pollutants into the storm drainage system, or into surrounding water bodies, is prohibited by local ordinance and state and federal law. It is your responsibility to keep pollutants, like car wash water, out of the storm drainage system and local waterways.

If car washing is a central activity of your business, follow these tips:

- ◆ Since commercial vehicle washing discharges cannot be discharged to the storm drain, you must construct a wash pad that drains to the sanitary sewer. The pad should be covered with a roof and surrounding grades sloped away from the wash area, or the wash area should be bermed, to prevent additional drainage, such as stormwater runoff, from entering the sanitary sewers.
- ◆ Treat and recycle wash water to minimize water use and sanitary sewer discharges.
- ◆ Install an oil/grit separator if required by the sewer agency or building department.

If car washing is an occasional activity of your business, follow these tips:

- ◆ Avoid washing vehicles on site. Take vehicles to a commercial car wash that is properly connected to the sanitary sewer, or dry cloth the vehicles.
- ◆ If car washing is provided as a courtesy benefit to your customers, consider providing a voucher for a properly equipped commercial car wash instead.

CAR WASHING

Additional practices for fleets and automobile sales lots:

- ◆ Fleet and sales lot owners must be careful with solvents or cleaners used to remove protective coatings from new cars. Discharges of these materials to the storm drain is never allowed.
- ◆ Employees or contractors that utilize cleaning agents on fleets or cars in sales lots must collect the resulting wastewater and discharge it to the sanitary sewer. It is not permissible to allow the water to evaporate, as the pollutants are simply left behind and will be mobilized by subsequent rainfall.

If washing your car at home, follow these tips:

- ◆ Using a commercial car wash that is properly equipped is the best method.
- ◆ If you choose to wash your car at home, wash it on a lawn or other unpaved surface to reduce the amount of car wash water runoff.



**Placer County Department of
Public Works and Facilities
Stormwater Quality Division**

Phone: (530) 745-7557

3091 County Center Drive, Suite 220
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Email: stormwtrquality@placer.ca.gov

Or visit us on the web at

<http://www.placer.ca.gov/Stormwater>

**Household Hazardous Waste
Disposal and Recycling
Information**

Phone: (916) 543-3960

Or visit us on the web at

<http://www.placer.ca.gov/recycle>

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