Stormwater runoff from your community carwash

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COMMUNITY CAR WASHES

A message from Don Benton, Director:

During a car wash, dirty water containing soap, detergents, dirt, grease, oils and other residues wash off vehicles and flow across pavement to the nearest storm drain or inlet.

The wastewater from our homes and businesses flows to a sanitary sewer for treatment. But the runoff water from parking lots flows to storm drains. In Clark County, storm drains flow directly to our creeks, streams and rivers without any treatment to slow down water or remove the pollution.

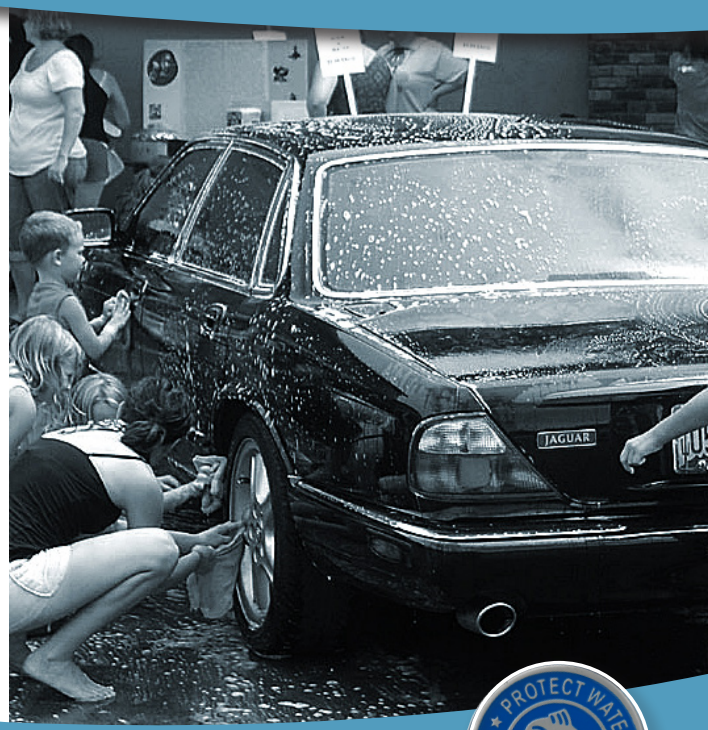
The pollutants in car wash runoff, such as phosphorus, can harm fish and other wildlife that rely on clean water. The pollutants can also bury critical wildlife habitat in our streams.

Do your part to keep our streams and rivers clean!

Does your business support local charities by letting them using your parking area for fundraising car wash events? We want to partner with you to help keep polluted wash water from entering your storm drain.

- **Have your own "River-Friendly Car Wash" kit** at your business for local organizations to use on your site
- **Learn how to host** a successful river-friendly event at your business
- **Join Clark County's Green Business Program** to learn more about why it is important to protect your stormwater

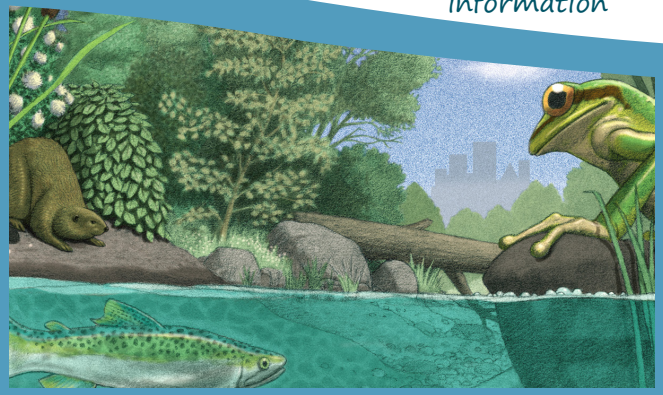
See inside for more information



Did you know?

- On average, it takes approximately 65 gallons of water to wash one car.
- If a car wash event washed 32 cars, that would be more than 2,080 gallons of polluted water sent to the storm drain.
- That would be enough polluted water to fill over 22,000 soda cans!

Goal: *Collect polluted wash water and pump it to a sanitary drain to protect our creeks and rivers.*



PROTECT WATER ONLY RAIN IN DRAIN

Guidelines for river-friendly car washes

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Get started!

When hosting a charity car wash at your place of business, work with the volunteers to create a river-friendly event. Here is a checklist of things to remember for your site:

- ❒ **Pick an appropriate location on your site to set up the wash** (away from your traffic lanes and where water can be collected safely).
- ❒ **Provide the group your river-friendly car washing kit and instructions -** review all instructions on the timing, key contact people and other important information.
- ❒ **Review the kit with the group to ensure proper set-up, water collection and discharge -** proper set-up should make it easy to catch all car wash runoff and redirect it to a sanitary sewer.
- ❒ **Before beginning the car wash, sweep up any litter or trash in the area** to minimize potential pollutants getting in the water.
- ❒ **Use only soaps, cleaners or detergents label as "non-toxic," "biodegradable," and/or "phosphorus-free" -** The safest products are vegetable or citrus based.
- ❒ **Minimize the amount of water used during the wash -** Use an adjustable nozzle to turn off the water when not needed.

Tips for a successful event....

- ❒ **Direct cars to the designated wash site** (near the water containment area) prior to rinsing or washing.
- ❒ **Never dispose of any left over products or wash water down the storm drain.** Safely dispose of left over materials in the designated outlet to the sanitary sewer.
- ❒ **Do not use or hose off engine degreasers** unless water is properly collected.
- ❒ **Avoid acid-based wheel cleaners -** try using the appropriate scrub brushes to get off stubborn dirt and grime.
- ❒ **Use buckets of soapy water to re-soap wash cloths** instead of adding more soap directly to the rags or sponges.
- ❒ **Ask your group to complete a car wash program log -** track the number of cars washed, hours of washing, etc.
- ❒ **Have fun! Know your watershed -** Thank your customers and let them know that they are protecting the environment and their local watershed. Visit our website to find your watershed location.
- ❒ **Market your business as a river-friendly car wash host** for future events.

Your River-Friendly Car Wash kit includes:

- Drain cover mat
- Water collection booms
- Portable pump
- 50-foot hose for discharge
- Safety cones
- Grounded electrical extension cord
- River-Friendly car wash signs
- Instructions for your car-wash event
- Program logs for your users

Did you know that Clark County is required to protect stormwater runoff from pollution as required by the Clean Water Act?

Clark County's Clean Water Program partners with local agencies and businesses to help keep our water clean. Per our 2013 National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Permit with the State of Washington, we are required to educate the public on their role in protecting runoff that affects the health of our watersheds.

For more information on green business practices, contact Clark County's Green Business Program:

www.clarkgreenbiz.com

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Learn more about stormwater at www.clark.wa.gov/stormwater