

**RESIDENTIAL CAR WASH GUIDE**

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**Polluting Lakes & Streams**

Soapy water going down storm drains pollutes your lakes and streams by adding excess phosphorous and other chemicals!

A sanitary sewer collects dirty wastewater from toilets, sinks, etc. and carries this to a wastewater treatment plant to improve water quality.

A storm drain collects and carries rain water from the streets, parking lots and rooftops and, in almost all cases, discharges it untreated into our lakes, rivers, creeks, streams and wetlands.

**Look at the Options**

Paying attention to how you wash your car is one way that everyone can contribute to clean water. Car washing alternatives include:

- Wash on lawns or other surfaces where water can seep into the ground
- Take your car to a commercial car wash, either self-serve or machine wash
- Divert water away from storm drain



**Environmental damage**

Pollutants in car wash water that are discharged to storm drains are not removed and end up in our lakes, rivers, creeks and other waterways.

Wash water contains dirt, road grime, oils and soaps that can destroy aquatic life, habitat and the quality of our water.

**FACTS**

1. Assume a solution containing one cup of All Soil Detergent for each gallon of water is used to wash a car. To safely discharge that single gallon of soapy water to a storm drain, it would have to be diluted with over 800 gallons of water.
2. Once in the water, a small amount of oil goes a long way. A single pint of oil stretches into a one-acre slick.



## What You Can Do

If you are washing your car at home, wash it on your lawn where the wash water will soak into the soil and won't drain directly into a storm drain. It is ideal to divert wash water away from a storm drain.

### CAR WASHING TIPS

- Use a flow control device on your hose, such as a hand sprayer with an on and off trigger. This helps to conserve water
- Less water usage means less wash water soaked into grass, gravel or diverted into sanitary sewer drains
- Instead of washing your car at home, use a commercial car wash facility - All wash water at these facilities enters sanitary sewer drains



## Ways to Protect our Water

Prior to holding a public car wash at a gas station, grocery store, school church or restaurant, contact the City of Newcastle Public Works Department at 425.649.4444

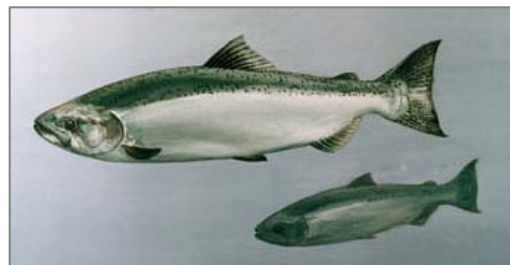
Public Works will help divert your activity's run-off directly to a sanitary sewer clean-out or grassy or gravelly area - ensuring soapy water never enters the storm water system!

Make a reservation for a catch basin insert and portable pump - tools that employ proper diversion of wash water into the sanitary sewer system.



### REMEMBER

All soaps, even bio-degradable ones, are toxic to fish. Help preserve our natural resources - don't allow soapy water to enter storm drains.



*The quality of our water depends on your help!*

13020 newcastle way, newcastle, wa 98059



## More Information

Get even more tips from the Water Quality Program & Department of Ecology here:

[www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0810086.pdf](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0810086.pdf)

[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/CarWash.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/CarWash.html)

Call 1.800.RECYCLE for a free copy of the household resources guide "Turning the Tide on Toxics in the Home" and learn how to make your own lawn-safe soap!

## Report Spills & Waste

If you witness someone pouring waste down a storm drain, contact the City of Newcastle Spills Hotline at 425.649.4444 x 137.

For after-hours emergencies, such as hazardous waste spills, contact Ecology's 24-hr Emergency Spill Response line at 425.649.7000.