

Residential Car Washing



Washing Your Car

Most people aren't aware that by washing their car in their home driveway they may be polluting their creeks. The best way to wash your car is at a professional car washing facility, where water is recycled or sent to the sanitary sewer system. Anything that falls on or near the street enters a storm drain inlet and flows directly through the storm drain pipe to local bodies of water like creeks or streams. Drips, leaks and spills of soap, oil, grease, gas, antifreeze and other toxics used by automobiles are washed off and carried by rainfall or water to pollute our waterways.

Soap from wash water, entering a creek through the storm drain, is harmful to aquatic life and plants. Even biodegradable soaps will biodegrade slowly and will negatively impact aquatic life. Automobiles can be washed regularly without soap and lots of water by wiping the exterior with a wet cloth or paper towel. If a soap wash is necessary, collect wash water/soapy water and discharge it to a sanitary sewer through the sink or toilet or take your car to a commercial car wash where the soap and pollutants are treated.

When it rains the oils and grease are all washed off the paved areas and flow directly to the creeks and streams through the storm drains. To prevent this from happening, get all leaks fixed and cover stained areas with powder soap and cat litter to soak up the oil. Then sweep the mixture up and dispose of it in the trash.

Be careful when filling and re-filling your car with fluids because any leaks and drips will be washed into the storm drain and into creeks and streams. Clean up all of the leaks with the same process as oil leaks and drips.

