

Car Washing 101

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



WHEN YOU'RE WASHING YOUR CAR IN THE DRIVEWAY,
YOU'RE NOT JUST WASHING YOUR CAR IN THE DRIVEWAY.

Everything that enters our storm drains runs directly into our streams, lakes, rivers, and Puget Sound – **untreated**. Vehicle wash water contains pollutants like oil, grease, heavy metals, solvents, surfactants, sludge, and soaps. So when you wash your vehicle over a hard surface like your driveway, all that harmful stuff goes down the storm drain and pollutes our waters. Even biodegradable soap pollutes!

NOT-SO-FUN FACTS

- Over **two million gallons** of contaminated car wash water flow into our streams each year. It's one of the largest contributors to stormwater pollution.
- Phosphates from car washing soap cause excess algae to grow in our waters. When algae decays, it uses up the oxygen in the water that fish need to survive.

WASH YOUR VEHICLE A SAFER WAY

Instead of washing in your driveway:

- Use a commercial car wash
- Use waterless car washing products
- Wash on a lawn or gravel so the dirty water can seep into the ground
- Divert the dirty wash water away from the storm drain to a place it can soak in

DON'T BREAK THE LAW

Gig Harbor Municipal Code

14.30.050 contains a long list of contaminants you're not allowed to dump in the storm drain. Not surprisingly, soap is one of them. Don't find yourself with a code violation!

LEARN MORE

Visit pugetsoundstartshere.org
for more ways to help keep Puget Sound healthy.

