



R-2 AUTOMOBILE WASHING

Automobile washing activities have the potential to contribute pollutants because road dust washed from vehicles may contain metals and hydrocarbons. Any leaking fluids washed from the automobile may be carried to the storm drain by the wash water. Detergents used for automobile washing may also contain phosphorus and foaming agents, which contribute to the eutrophication of receiving waterbodies. The pollution prevention activities outlined in this fact sheets are used to prevent the discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system.

The activities outlined in this fact sheet target the following pollutants:	
Sediment	x
Nutrients	X
Bacteria	
Foaming Agents	X
Metals	X
Hydrocarbons	X
Hazardous Materials	x
Pesticides and Herbicides	
Other	

Think before conducting automobile washing activities. Remember - The ocean starts at your front door.

Required Activities

- Shake floor mats into trashcan or vacuum to clean. Do not shake over ground.
- If using cleaners (such as acid based wheel cleaners) use a rag to wipe them on and off, do not rinse them off with water.
- If possible, divert runoff from automobile washing to a grassy surface large enough to contain and allow complete infiltration
- Dispose of excess wash water into the sanitary sewer (i.e. via sink, or toilet) or onto a landscaped area that will allow for complete infiltration.
- Conduct engine degreasing at a commercial facility that is set up to handle that type of waste.

Recommended Activities

- When possible, use commercial wash facilities
- Wash vehicles over pervious surfaces such as lawns and gravel areas
- Choose soaps, cleaners, or detergents labeled “non-toxic”, “phosphate free”, or “biodegradable”. Vegetable and citrus-based products are typically safest for the environment.
- Turn off water when not actively washing down automobile.
- If available, use established neighborhood wash areas, where runoff is properly controlled and managed.

For additional information contact:

County of Orange, Watershed & Coastal Resources - Stormwater Program
(714)567-6363 or visit our website at: www.ocwatersheds.com