

# CITY OF POMONA STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION PROGRAM



## Vehicle Washing and Maintenance

Most people aren't aware of what they are doing wrong. 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, streams or rivers. Drips, leaks and spills of soap, oil, grease, gas, antifreeze and other toxics used by automobiles are washed off and carried by rainfall or urban runoff to the local waterways.

What's wrong is soap from wash water, entering a local waterway 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 water by wiping the exterior with a wet cloth or paper towel. If a soap wash is necessary, follow the Best Management Practices listed below:

- Minimize the amount of water used by employing water conservation practices such as turning off nozzles or kinking the hose when not spraying a car, and using a low volume pressure washer;
- Use biodegradable, phosphate free detergents and non-toxic cleaning products.
- When possible, wash cars on a permeable surface where wash water can percolate into the ground (e.g. gravel or grassy areas);
- Empty buckets of soapy or rinse water into the sanitary sewer system (e.g. sinks or toilets); 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 absorbent (e.g. cat litter) to soak up the oil. Then brush it in, sweep the mixture up, and dispose of it in the trash.

**Environmental Concerns, Call (909) 620-3628**  
**Water Watcher 24-Hour Reporting Line, Call (909) 620-2244**  
**To Report Illegal Storm Water Discharges, Call 1(888) CLEAN LA**

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