

Other Recommendations for Pollution Prevention and Water Conservation

- Before beginning your car wash, remove all trash and debris from the car washing area.
- Always shut off or kink hoses when not in use.
- Use a bucket of soapy water to re-soap rags or sponges throughout the wash rather than adding more soap directly to the rag or sponge.
- Wring rags and sponges into buckets, not onto the ground.
- Do not empty buckets of soapy water into the parking lot, street, gutter, or storm drains. Always empty buckets into the sanitary system (e.g., sinks or toilets).



Town of Windsor

Car Wash Fundraisers


March 2010



Town of Windsor

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There's no problem with car washing, it's just how and where it is done.

During a car wash, dirty water containing soap and detergents, residues from exhaust fumes, gasoline and motor oils washes off the cars. If not directed properly, this water flows off the pavement and into nearby catch basins and storm drains.

Unlike the water we use in our homes, which is treated at wastewater treatment plants, the water that goes into storm drains flows directly into wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans without any kind of treatment.

While a single car wash fundraiser event will create little adverse environmental impact on the environment, collectively car wash fundraiser events have the potential to contribute significant amounts of water pollution if directed to the storm drains and waterways.

To comply with federal, state, and local regulations car wash wastewater should not be directed into the storm drain system or waterways.

The following list of good housekeeping practices and ideas will help you have an environmentally successful car wash fundraising event.

Good Housekeeping Practice #1

Vehicles could be washed inside an enclosed and roofed location where the floor drain is connected to the MDC sanitary sewer. Some commercial car wash operators may be willing to sponsor and/or make their facilities available for use.

Good Housekeeping Practice #2

Wash cars in an area where water can be directed to grassy areas and can slowly filter into the ground and not run off to the storm drain. Wherever possible, select a site where the cars can be driven onto grass or gravel for washing. Alternatively, select a site where the car wash wastewater will be either directed or can be pumped to a grass, gravel, or landscaped area. If your organization is interested in learning how to do this at your location contact the Town Environmental Planner at (860) 285-1987.

Good Housekeeping Practice #3

Use only soaps, cleaners, or detergents labeled "non-toxic", "phosphate free", or "biodegradable". Avoid the use of acid-based wheel cleaners. Biodegradable soap can be purchased from the Town. Please give us advanced notice of your event.

Good Housekeeping Practice #4

Coordinate with a local commercial car wash and sell tickets to the facility. Tickets could be good for a single event or used at anytime.

Good Housekeeping Practice #5

Think about a "waterless car wash". A few environmentally friendly products have been created that do not require the use of water.

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