

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

WATER
QUALITY
CONSORTIUM



All the soap, scum, and oily grit runs along the curb. Then into the storm drain and directly into our lakes creeks and the Big Thompson River. Moreover, that causes pollution, which is unhealthy for fish. So how do you avoid this whole mess? Easy. Wash your car on grass or gravel instead of the street. Better yet, take it to a car wash where the water is treated and recycled.

A cooperative venture between the Puget Sound Action Team, Department of Ecology, King County and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle and Tacoma.

CLEAN WATER IS IMPORTANT TO ALL OF US

It is up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years, sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now, more than 60 percent of water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from farms and gardens, and failing septic tanks. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. However, each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too—and that adds up to a pollution solution!

Why do we need clean water?

Having clean water is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean water provides recreation, commercial opportunities, fish habitat, drinking water, and it adds beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water, and all of us have a role in getting and keeping our lakes, rivers, creeks and ground waters clean.

What is the problem with car washing?

There is no problem with washing your car. It is just how and where you do it. Most soap contains phosphates and other chemicals that harm fish and water quality. The soap, together with the dirt and oil washed from your car, flows into nearby storm drains, which run directly into lakes, creeks or rivers. The phosphates from the soap can cause excess algae to grow. Algae look bad, smell bad, and harm water quality. As algae decay, the process uses up oxygen in the water that fish need.

This information is brought to you by the Water Quality Consortium, a group of public agencies working together to reduce nonpoint water pollution through education.

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<http://www.cityofloveland.org/departments/public-works/stormwater/stormwater-quality>

CLEAN WATER TIP:

How can you wash your car and help keep our waters clean?

- Use soap sparingly. Use a hose nozzle with a trigger to save water.
- When you are done, pour your bucket of dirty, soapy water down the sink, not in the street.
- Pour your bucket of soapy water on a grassy or gravel area so the ground can filter the water naturally.
- Wash your car on a grassy or gravel area so the ground can filter the water naturally.
- Best of all; take your car to a commercial car wash, especially if you plan to clean the engine or the bottom of your car. Most car washes re-use wash water several times before sending it to the sewer system for treatment.
- To find out more about what you can do to prevent water pollution call the number listed below.

