



KEEPING YOUR CAR AND THE ENVIRONMENT SPARKLING CLEAN

By Reducing Urban Runoff This Summer
You Can Protect Water Quality

Urban runoff occurs when water from car washing carries soap, residue from exhaust fumes, metals from brake pads, gasoline and motor oils into the storm drain. Unlike water that enters the sewer (from sinks and toilets); water that enters the storm drain is not treated before entering our waterways.

The best solution for preventing this type of urban runoff is to take your car to a commercial car wash. Water at these facilities is required by law to be captured and treated prior to being released to the sanitary sewer for further treatment. In many cases, the water is also recycled, which further protects the environment.

If washing your car at a commercial car wash is not an option, follow these simple steps to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of washwater runoff from your property:

- Choose soaps, cleaners or detergents labeled “non-toxic,” “phosphate-free” or “biodegradable.” Vegetable and citrus-based products are typically safest for the environment, but even these should not be allowed into the storm drain.
- Shake floor mats into the trashcan or vacuum them.
- Do not use acid-based wheel cleaners or “hose off” engine degreasers at home.
- Do not pour washwater onto your driveway, sidewalk, street, gutter or storm drain. Washwater should be disposed of in the sanitary sewer (through a sink or toilet) or onto an unpaved surface like your lawn.
- Use a nozzle to turn off water when not actively washing your car.
- Monitor vehicles for leaks and place a pan under the car if it is leaking. Keep your car well maintained.
- Never pour oil or antifreeze in the street, gutter or storm drain. Recycle these substances at a service station, Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center (HHWCC), or used oil recycling center. For the nearest Used Oil Collection Center call 1-800-CLEANUP or visit www.1800CLEANUP.ORG

Do Your Part!

Remember, the Ocean Begins At Your Front Door.

For more information about what you can do to prevent urban runoff pollution or to report a water pollution problem, contact the City of Laguna Hills at 949-707-2650 or visit www.ocwatersheds.com.

