



Vehicle Washing Operations and Activities



MANAGING VEHICLE WASH WATER TO MINIMIZE WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

- Wash vehicles with non-heated water and biodegradable detergents
- Where feasible, cleaning operations should be undertaken on grassed or graveled areas to prevent discharges to surface waters or storm drainage collection systems
- When cleaning operations cannot be performed as described above, and when operations are performed in the vicinity of a storm drainage collection system, cover the storm drain with a portable drain cover.
- Use sorbent booms to prevent wash water from discharging to surface waters and/or storm drains to remove oil, grease and foam from the wash water.
- Any excess ponded water should be removed and properly handled (i.e., discharged to a sanitary sewer collection system with permission from the system's owner) prior to removing the drain cover.
- Do not conduct steam cleaning, engine or parts cleaning at any time.
- Do not use acid-based wheel cleaners.
- Use detergents that are biodegradable with a pH in the range of 6-9 standard units.
- Notify the City where the cleaning service is being conducted prior to beginning operations.

WHY IS VEHICLE WASHING A WATER QUALITY CONCERN?

When cars are washed on paved surfaces, chemicals, automotive fluids and grease combine in the water. The polluted wash water flows across paved areas into storm drains then flowing directly to our local rivers, lakes and streams. These pollutants pose a serious threat to water quality.

Owners and operators of mobile vehicle cleaning operations and other vehicle service operations that conduct vehicle washing should be aware that any cleaning operation that causes or contributes to illicit discharges to the storm drainage system may be held liable for those actions and subject to penalties in accordance with the City's Stormwater Management Ordinance. For more information, visit our website at www.fayettevillenc.gov/stormwater.

WHO DOES THIS APPLY TO?

The information in this flyer applies to activities involved in the washing of automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, or any other vehicle. This guidance is intended for mobile car washes, car wash facilities, vehicle detail shops or other facilities that conduct vehicle washing operations.

Commercial operations caught illegally dumping wash water into the City's Storm Drainage system could receive a Notice of Violation in accordance with Chapter 23 of the Stormwater Management Ordinance.

Car Wash Best Management Practices

Below are some best management practices that can be utilized during outside carwash operations. Owners and operators of car wash operations should take every precaution to protect storm drains from runoff of car wash water pollutants. Using the following methods will help reduce pollution and protect water quality.



When vehicle washing is performed in the vicinity of a storm drainage collection system, cover the storm drain with a portable drain cover to prevent illegal discharges.



Portable water containment mats are an effective way to keep vehicle wash water on site. Collected wash water may be allowed to evaporate or disposed of through a sanitary sewer system with permission of the system owner.



Sorbent booms help prevent wash water from discharging to surface waters, and/or storm drains. They also help remove soil, grease and detergent foam from wash water.

Contact Us:

City of Fayetteville Stormwater Program

Phone: 910-433-1613

www.fayettevillenc.gov/stormwater



What about charity car washes?

Car washes are a popular fundraising option for many community groups. Here are some guidelines for protecting water quality during these events:

- Select a site where wash water can soak into grass or gravel
- If your site drains into a street, block off the storm drain and divert wash water to an area where the water can pool and evaporate throughout the day.
- Consider contacting the City to make arrangements for disposing of wash water through a sanitary sewer drain.
- Remove all trash and debris from the car washing area before you begin.
- Use bio-degradable for environmentally friendly soaps instead of harsh detergents. Look for soaps labeled phosphate free or biodegradable. Vegetable-based or citrus-based soaps are safest for the environment.
- Do not use acid-based wheel cleaners.
- Use buckets filled with soapy water to limit the amount of detergent used.
- Shake car mats over a trash can, not directly on the ground.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information regarding the City's stormwater program visit our website at www.fayettevillenc.gov/stormwater.