

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean.

Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. By protecting the health of our watersheds we can preserve and enhance the quality of life for Calabasas residents.

Stormwater flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil, and through lawns and storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil, grease, litter and other pollutants. This water drains directly into nearby creeks, streams and oceans, without receiving treatment at sewage plants.



Polluted stormwater contaminate streams creeks and eventually the pacific ocean. It can kill or damage plants, fish and wildlife, while degrading the quality of our water.



COMMERCIAL CAR WASHES IN CALABASAS

Mobile Gas Station/Car Wash
4830 Las Virgenes Road

Chevron Gas Station/Car Wash
4831 Las Virgenes Road

76 Gas Station/Car Wash
24115 Calabasas Road

PERMITTED MOBILE CAR WASHING COMPANIES:

www.cityofcalabasas.com/environmental/mobile-car-wash.html



CITY of CALABASAS

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Environmental Services
100 Civic Center Way
Calabasas, CA 91302
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WASH YOUR CAR THE RIGHT WAY



The car is clean but what about the water?



CITY of CALABASAS

The Calabasas City Council has adopted an ordinance regulating mobile car wash operations within the City of Calabasas. The ordinance requires mobile car wash businesses to obtain permits from the City and follow certain regulations to prevent pollutants from entering the storm drain system. Calabasas is the first California city regulating mobile commercial car wash operations.

The Clean Water Act requires cities to create enforceable regulations to prevent pollutants from discharging into storm drains and eventually polluting creeks and oceans. The operation of mobile car washes on various residential and commercial office driveways and parking lots typically violate the Clean Water Act. Such violations could subject the City to fines and notices of violations by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The Board is requesting that local governments increase their efforts to prevent wastewater generated from mobile washers to enter the storm drain systems and make sure the waste water is properly discharged to the sewer system or to a waste water recycling facility.

The new ordinance defines "Mobile commercial washing" as any activity conducted for compensation that involves the washing of automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, or any other vehicle, and which is moved from one location to another, such as to serve customers at their residences or places of work and includes any temporary car wash event conducted by any person for the purpose of fund raising.

The new permit system requires each mobile car wash operator to apply and receive a permit from the City's Public Works Department. The permit is valid for one year and is not transferable. Each permit holder must ensure that all car wash employees are knowledgeable of the discharge limitations listed in the City's ordinance and that they use appropriate preventive measures whenever they are engaged in car washing activities.

THE FACTS ABOUT CAR WASHING

For many, car washing is a springtime ritual. Often, citizens don't know that by washing all that winter grime off their vehicles they might actually be causing harm to our local watershed. Water entering storm drains, unlike water that enters sanitary sewers, does not undergo treatment before it is discharged into our waterways. When cars are washed on streets and driveways, that dirty water eventually winds up in our creeks and eventually the ocean.



Washing one car may not seem to be a problem, but collectively car washing activity adds up to big problems for our local creeks and streams. Pollution associated with car washing degrades water quality while also finding its way into sediments, negatively impacting aquatic habitats.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) it takes 25 gallons of water for a 5-minute shower and 35 gallons to fill a normal bathtub. In comparison, the average person washing a car uses more than 500 gallons of water! All that water and the suds from the soap wash down our streets into local waterways.

Among the many impacts of motor vehicles on our environment, car washing has been noted by water quality experts as a serious contributor to water pollution.

Water that runs off a car when it is washed in a driveway, street, or parking lot can contain substances that pollute the environment. Dirty water containing soap, detergents, residue from exhaust fumes, gasoline, heavy metals from rust, and motor oils can wash off cars and flow directly to storm drains and into the nearest creek or stream where it can harm water quality and wildlife.

The phosphates from soap can cause excess algae to grow. Excessive algae smell bad, look bad, and harm water quality. As algae decay, the process uses up oxygen in the water that fish need to breath.

Car wash fundraisers can be a significant source of this kind of pollution. These events are usually held in heavily paved areas where there is little runoff control or grass to filter out harmful substances before they reach our waterways

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The best way to minimize the effect washing your car has on the environment is to use a commercial car wash. Most locations reuse wash water several times before sending it to a treatment plant. However, if you choose to wash your car at home or on the street, these are some things that you can do to minimize negative water quality impact.

- Wash on a area that absorbs water such as gravel or grass. This can filter water before it enters groundwater, storm drains, or creeks. Avoid washing cars on concrete or asphalt pavement unless it drains into a vegetated area.
- Minimize water usage. Use a spray gun with flow restriction to minimize water volume and runoff. Always empty wash buckets into sinks or toilets.
- When planning a car wash fundraiser, try to develop a partnership with a commercial car wash facility, or use a safe location.

