

## PROPER DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER

# Fundraising Car Washes

Car washes have long been a favorite fundraiser for scout troops, schools and other non-profit groups. But in the last few years we have become aware of the negative impact car washes have on the environment. Dirty water containing soaps, detergent, residue from exhaust fumes, gasoline and motor oil washes off the cars and directly into the storm drain, and then into the Bay. Collectively, car wash events can account for some serious pollution.

## Choosing a site

It is important to choose a site for your car wash where wastewater can be disposed of properly. Some popular sites, such as service stations and parking lots, usually do not have the necessary connections to the *sanitary sewer system*.

## Here are some options:

- Find a sponsor for your car wash that uses a closed-loop washing system — one that recycles its water.
- Ask a local commercial car wash to donate part of their day's receipts or see if they will allow you to sell a special wash ticket.
- Hold your car wash at an industrial or commercial site that has a designated vehicle wash area.
- Rent a mobile washing system that can contain the water on the site. The collected water must be disposed of properly into the sanitary sewer, and not into a *stormdrain*.
- Contact your city's local clean water program to see how you can set up an area to drain wash water to the sewer.



Protecting Alameda County  
Creeks, Wetlands & the Bay

[cleanwaterprogram.org](http://cleanwaterprogram.org)



## Keep car wash water OUT of storm drains.



Pouring cleaning fluids or soapy wash water from auto activities into the gutters or storm drains will damage sensitive habitats and kill wildlife. Water flowing into storm drains travels directly to local creeks and then to **San Francisco Bay**. It does not go to a water treatment plant first.

Learn more about preventing water pollution and the Clean Water Program at [www.cleanwaterprogram.org](http://www.cleanwaterprogram.org).



## What about biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products?

These guidelines apply even to cleaning products labeled “non-toxic” and “biodegradable.”

- “Non-toxic” means the product is not toxic to the user.
- “Biodegradable” means the product will eventually break down. Biodegradable products can still harm aquatic wildlife since they need time to break down before they are safe. When biodegradable products enter a creek, they are generally still toxic and can harm wildlife and plants.

## What about leftover or unwanted cleaning products?

Leftover cleaning products should be properly disposed of. Contact the Hazardous Waste agency for your area for more information. See phone numbers at right.

### KEY DEFINITIONS

The **Storm Drain System** was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks or San Francisco Bay without any treatment.

The **Sanitary Sewer System** collects and transports sanitary wastes from interior building plumbing systems to the wastewater treatment plant where the wastewater is treated.



### CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Simple changes to your operations and maintenance can help you comply with local regulations. The Clean Water Program makes it easy.

[cleanwaterprogram.org](http://cleanwaterprogram.org)

## For More Help

For advice and approval on wastewater disposal to the sanitary sewer system, contact:

### Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland or Piedmont

East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD)..... (510) 287-1651

### Castro Valley

Castro Valley Sanitary District .. (510) 537-0757

### Cities of Dublin or Pleasanton

Dublin-San Ramon Services District..... (925) 828-0515

### Cities of Fremont, Newark or Union City

Union Sanitary District ..... (510) 477-7500

### City of Hayward

City of Hayward ..... (510) 881-7900

### City of Livermore

City of Livermore ..... (925) 960-8100

### Cities of San Lorenzo, unincorporated portions of San Leandro and Hayward

Oro Loma Sanitary District ..... (510) 481-6971

### City of San Leandro

City of San Leandro..... (510) 577-3401

## Local Stormwater Agencies

For advice on avoiding disposal to the storm drain system, contact:

Alameda..... (510) 747-7930  
Albany ..... (510) 528-5770  
Berkeley..... (510) 981-6400  
Dublin ..... (925) 833-6630  
Emeryville ..... (510) 596-3728  
Fremont..... (510) 494-4570  
Hayward ..... (510) 881-7900  
Livermore ..... (925) 960-8100  
Newark ..... (510) 578-4286  
Oakland ..... (510) 238-6600  
Piedmont..... (510) 420-3050  
Pleasanton ..... (925) 931-5500  
San Leandro ..... (510) 577-3401  
Unincorporated Alameda County..... (510) 670-5868  
Union City..... (510) 675-5308

## Local Hazardous Waste Agencies

Alameda County Environmental Health ..... (510) 567-6780  
(Serves Alameda, Albany, Castro Valley, Dublin, Emeryville, Newark, Piedmont, San Lorenzo, and Sunol.)  
Berkeley Toxics..... (510) 981-7460  
Fremont Fire..... (510) 494-4213  
Hayward Fire ..... (510) 583-4910  
Livermore-Pleasanton Fire ..... (925) 454-2362  
Oakland Fire ..... (510) 238-3927  
San Leandro ..... (510) 577-3401  
Union City..... (510) 675-5358