

# WHERE DO YOU WASH YOUR CAR?



**Did you know there are over 4 million vehicles in Southwest Michigan?  
If motor fluids or the dirty water from washing our cars are dumped or washed  
into the storm drain, it pollutes our local waterways.  
So, proper car care and disposal of fluids will help to protect our inland lakes,  
streams and Lake Michigan!**

**Southwest Michigan  
Water Quality  
Coalition**

[www.swmpc.org/water.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/water.asp)

# What Can I Do?

## Tips for Car Washing

### Remember The Best Way to Wash Your Car Is At A Carwash

- ☔ Take your car to the car wash on a certain day every week

Did you know that an average car wash at home uses 116 gallons of water?

### If you choose to wash your car at home, here are a few tips:

- ☔ Wash on grass, gravel, **not on a paved driveway** or street
- ☔ **Minimize** the **amount of water** you use by using a hose nozzle with a trigger
- ☔ **Reduce** the amount of **soap** you use
- ☔ **Do not rinse** sponges and wash rags onto the ground but into buckets, **then pour** the buckets of soapy water down the sink when done

#### What soap should you use when washing at home?

Wash with mild detergents or soaps that say "biodegradable" or "phosphate free" or use the recipe below. Remember to wash on an area that allows the water to soak into the ground.

#### Car Wash Recipe

Use this concoction to help keep out toxins!

1 gallon water  
2 tsp. castile soap (for example, Dr. Bonner's)  
2 tsp. lemon juice or vinegar

Mix well and wash!

### Watch for fluids that leak from your car so they don't enter our waters.

If you choose to change your oil and other fluids yourself, **label** the waste containers. Then, take them to your community's household hazardous waste collection day or to a business that accepts used oil.

For HHW Collection Information contact:

Berrien County 269-983-7111 ex. 8234 OR  
Cass County MSUE 269-445-4438

- Never **dump** used oil, antifreeze, or other fluids on the ground or down the storm drain.
- **Use** kitty litter promptly to absorb small amounts of spilled vehicle fluids. Then sweep it into a bag and throw it in the trash.

### For more information on car washing visit:

<http://www.semcog.org/OursToProtect/7SimpleSteps/CarCareTip.htm>

keep it **BLUE**



only rain in the drain

[www.swmpc.org/water.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/water.asp)