## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!

- Prior to a washing, block all storm drains with an impervious barrier such as gravel bags or berms, or seal storm drains with plugs or rubber mats. Make sure this practice does not flood the area or adversely affect vehicle or pedestrian traffic.
- **Never dispose of wash water into the street, storm drains, landscape drains, drainage ditches, or streams.**
- Wash vehicles and equipment on grassy or gravel areas so that the wash water can seep into the ground.
- **Create** a containment area with berms and tarps or take advantage of low ground to keep wash water contained.
- **Check** that the wash water is not leaking through and add more berms or barriers to contain the wash water.

## JUST ENOUGH FOR THE JOB!

- Minimize water use by using high pressure, low volume nozzles.
- Use the minimal amount and least toxic detergents and degreasers you will need to complete the job. Try phosphate free detergents.
- Use a mop or rags to clean heavily soiled areas before power washing.

## ONLY RAIN DOWN THE STORM DRAIN!!

- Do not wash equipment or vehicles outdoors on saturated ground or on days when rain is probable.
- Pump or vacuum up all wash water in the contained area.
- Pump or pour the wash water to landscaped areas that will not run off to a storm drain; or with Risk Management approval, drain it to the sanitary sewer through an interior building drain, sink, or private sewer clean-out. Discharges to the sewer **should not** contain hazardous materials, grease, grit, or any material that could clog piping.
- Sediments and other solids remaining on the ground should be swept or vacuumed up immediately so they don't wash into the storm drain system during a rain event.

## PREVENT WATER POLLUTION ON THE JOB

The following are some Management Practices that must be implemented to eliminate polluted water discharges to the storm drain system:

- Reduce or eliminate chemical pesticides or fertilizers from landscaping and lawns.
- Maintain chemical storage areas appropriately. Cover chemicals and use secondary containment.
- Collect and properly dispose of wash water to the sanitary sewer or landscaped areas.
- Dispose of waste appropriately and cover dumpsters and garbage cans.
- Wash vehicles and equipment at car washes that recycle the wash water, or discharge the wash water to a sanitary sewer.
- Dry sweep or vacuum instead of washing down to storm drains.
- Keep storm drains clear of debris, soil, sand, silt, and wastes.
- Perform vehicle maintenance and repair at approved locations.
- Implement spill prevention and response for chemical storage areas.
- Implement sediment and erosion control.

CAL POLY

Environmental Health & Safety
Building 80
(805) 756-6664
(805) 756-1602-fax
http://www.afd.calpoly.edu/ehs/

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# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR POWER WASHING

(Mobile and Surface Cleaning)

**Report spills and all discharges immediately to:**

**Envir Health & Safety 756-6664**
**or**
**University Police 756-2281**

# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR POWER WASHING

(Mobile and Surface Cleaning)

## A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT IS IMPORTANT TO ALL OF US!

At Cal Poly, storm drains flow directly into our creeks, lakes, and the ocean without treatment. In recent years, sources of water pollution, like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. However, the majority of water pollution now occurs from things like cars leaking oil, wash water from restaurants, fertilizers from farms, lawns and gardens, failing septic tanks, residential car washing, and pet waste washing into the storm drains and into waterways and the ocean. All these sources add up to a pollution problem! But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too—and that adds up to a pollution solution! Cal Poly is committed to improving water quality and reducing the amount of pollutants that enter our precious waterways.

## BIODEGRADABLE SOAPS

"Biodegradable" is a popular marketing term that can be misleading. Because a product is labeled as biodegradable doesn't mean that it is non-toxic. Some products are more toxic than others, but none are harmless to aquatic life. Soapy water entering the storm drain system can impact fish and other wildlife within hours.

## ONLY RAIN DOWN THE STORM DRAIN!!

**Storm Drains** are open drains on streets, parking lots, loading docs, roofs, and any other surfaces that receive rain water. Cal Poly storm drains discharge water – as well as the pollutants and litter it picks up – into adjacent creeks and eventually the ocean without any form of treatment. Because this water receives no treatment, it is especially important to keep pollutants out.

**Power Washing** is any activity that uses a water pressure system, including steam cleaning, to clean vehicles, equipment, sidewalks, buildings, dumpsters, or other impervious surfaces. In addition to water, detergents, degreasers and other products may be used in commercial power washing.

### What is the problem with Power Washing?

Did you know that storm drains are NOT connected to sanitary sewer systems or treatment plants? The primary purpose of storm drains is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding. **Wash water from power washing activities may contain significant quantities of oil, grease, chemicals, dirt, and detergents that could end up in our creeks, rivers, lakes, and the ocean.**

Disposing of materials into storm drains causes serious ecological problems—and is **PROHIBITED** by law.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Best Management Practices, or BMP's, are procedures that help to prevent pollutants from entering our storm drains. Each of us can do our part to keep storm water clean. Using BMP's adds up to a pollution solution!

## USE DRY CLEAN-UP METHODS

- Instead of pressure washing, determine what alternative dry methods are available.
- Use mops, brooms, rags or wire brushes to clean pavement, buildings, and equipment as much as possible.
- Use vacuums or other machines to remove and collect loose debris before applying water.

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