



## Fact Sheet

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



*BMPs facilitate regulatory compliance; they go beyond meeting established minimum requirements. They are ways of carrying out your business activities that can significantly reduce the risk of pollution and may even save you money. They're good for the environment, your customers, and your business.*

### COMPLIANCE

*State law mandates that local agencies set minimum standards to protect the sanitary sewer and storm drain systems. This Fact Sheet includes minimum standards for regulatory compliance set by CCCSD and by your city's Stormwater Ordinance. Failure to comply with these minimum standards can result in citations and possible fines.*

# Vehicle Washing

Vehicle repair and maintenance activities often include washing of vehicles and/or vehicle parts. Commercial car wash facilities are designed to properly manage the wash water. If you want to wash on site, the following standards apply.

### MINIMUM STANDARDS

Meet discharge limits set by CCCSD.

Keep wash water out of the storm drain system.

### On-Site Wash Area

Design and manage your wash area so that it meets CCCSD requirements.

Size the wash area so that it adequately captures all wastewater generated by the washing operation.

Prevent storm water from entering the wash area's sanitary sewer drain (e.g., install roof over wash area).

Keep wash water from flowing into storm drains by building a berm around the wash area. Slope the surrounding surfaces away from the wash area.

Install an appropriately designed grease, oil and/or solids removal device that meets CCCSD specifications.

Maintain your oil/water separator or other pretreatment device so that it works as intended. Manage these wastes properly.

If you use acids, caustics, metal brighteners or solvents, you may need to provide additional pretreatment such as pH adjustment to meet CCCSD discharge requirements.

Water from pressure washing or steam cleaning engine and vehicle parts may require specialized pretreatment. Check with CCCSD.

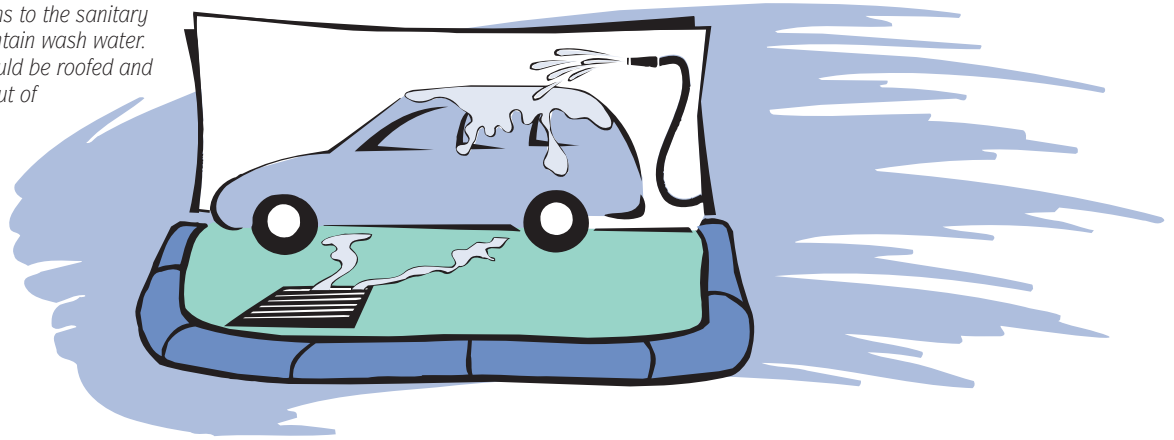
Discharge of vehicle fluids to the sanitary sewer is prohibited.

### Rinsing Vehicle Exteriors

Wastewater from rinsing dust off the exterior surface of cars can go down a storm drain if you use only plain water (no hot water, steam or pressurized water; no soap, cleaners or solvents).

**ALL SOAPS,  
even biodegradable ones,  
ARE HARMFUL TO FISH**

*Be sure wash water drains to the sanitary sewer. Use a berm to contain wash water. Outdoor wash areas should be roofed and sloped. Keep rainwater out of sanitary sewer.*



### **Mobile Washing Services**

Mobile washing services you hire must comply with storm water and sanitary sewer regulations. Your business is responsible for wastewater generated at your facility by mobile washers.

The wash water discharge cannot go down a storm drain, and may need to be pretreated before it is discharged down the sanitary sewer. Verify that your mobile washer has a permit from CCCSD. They cannot discharge wash water to the sanitary sewer without it.

### **BMPs**

Consider using a commercial car wash facility.

See if your business can obtain a discount for frequent use or can obtain car wash coupons to distribute to your own customers.

Do not change oil or perform other vehicle maintenance in the wash area.

Consider installing a closed-loop water recycling system to save water and reduce or eliminate discharges to the sanitary sewer.

### **ABOUT THIS FACT SHEET**

This fact sheet is one of a series created by CCCSD to help businesses understand why and how to prevent water pollution. The contents are informational and summary in nature and do not constitute legal advice. For more information, call CCCSD's Source Control Section at (925) 229-7288.

For more information on hazardous waste requirements, call the Contra Costa County Environmental Health Department at (925) 646-2286.

Other regulatory agencies you may wish to contact include:

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District  
San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District

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