

Where You Wash Your Car Matters to Water Quality

Did You Know?

- There are over 4 million vehicles in Southwest Michigan.
- The average car wash at home uses 116 gallons of water.
- Keeping your vehicle maintained and avoiding leaks can protect water quality.



Source:

http://lakewhatcom.wsu.edu/UserFiles/Image/car_wash.jpg

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

1. Wash on grass or gravel, this allows the water to filter back into the ground. **DO NOT WASH ON A PAVED SURFACE**-the water rushes into the storm drains or ditches with chemicals and oils from the pavement and degrades water quality.
2. Minimize the amount of water you use by attaching a hose nozzle with a trigger. This ensures that you only use the water that you intended to.
3. Reduce the amount of soap you use. More suds does not equal a more thorough clean.
4. Do not rinse sponges, buckets and rags onto the ground. Instead rinse them into a bucket and dispose of dirty water into a sink.
5. Try using a biodegradable soap when washing your car or try using this Car Wash Recipe to decrease the toxins from car wash soap:
 - 1 gallon of water
 - 2 tsp. of lemon juice or vinegar
 - 2 tsp. castile soap such as Dr.Bonner's



For more information on Car Washing or to print out a fact sheet for your community visit the following links

Car washing information:

http://www.swmpc.org/car_washing.asp

Fact sheet:

http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/PEP_Web_CarWash.pdf

