

# OUTDOOR WASHING

## Car Washing

Brochure

Lake Whatcom Cooperative Management

## Pressure Washing

Door Hanger

City of Bellingham



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# Protect Your Drinking Water

## Car Washing





# Protect Your Drinking Water



## Car washing can be harmful to our waterways

Outdoor car washing results in large amounts of dirt, road grime, oil, nutrients and heavy metals flowing into waterways. The detergent-rich water used to wash the grime off our cars flows down the street, into the storm drain and into the nearest body of water. **Allowing anything other than rain water to enter storm drains is a violation of Bellingham Municipal Code 15.42.050.**

## Outdoor Car Washing

Most impacts from car washing are from residents, businesses and car wash fundraisers discharging polluted wash water directly into the storm drain system.

## Storm Drains



Water that falls down storm drains travels directly to the nearest body of water without being cleaned.

## Commercial Car Washes

**Wash your car at a commercial car wash!** This saves water and diverts harmful runoff away from streams. Commercial car wash water is recycled and sent to the wastewater plant for treatment.



## A Note on Soaps

All soaps can harm our waterways. Soaps break the surface tension of water, allowing oxygen to escape and causing fish and other aquatic life to suffocate.

**Biodegradable:** Even biodegradable soap is dangerous in waterways. To be used properly, it must be filtered through grass or gravel where bacteria in the ground can break it down.



**Phosphorous-Free:** Be sure your soaps are phosphorous-free. Human activity causes an unnatural amount of phosphorus to build up in our marine ecosystems harming aquatic life.

## Water Conservation

**Car wash water usage:**

TYPE OF WASH	GALLONS PER CAR
Self-service	8 – 18
Conveyor wash	14 – 60
In-bay automatic	10 – 50
<b>Home car washing</b>	<b>16 – 180*</b>

*\*most is wasted down the driveway*

### Water Conservation Tip!



Use a spray nozzle on your hose so water isn't wasted by letting the hose run!



# Protect Your Drinking Water

# YOU CAN HELP

## Watershed Friendly Car Washes

If you must wash your car at home, park on the lawn or gravel. This allows the dirty water to soak into the ground and pollutants will be filtered out. If you notice water isn't sinking into the ground but runs into the street, take a break or move locations, and use less water.



## Fundraiser Coupons

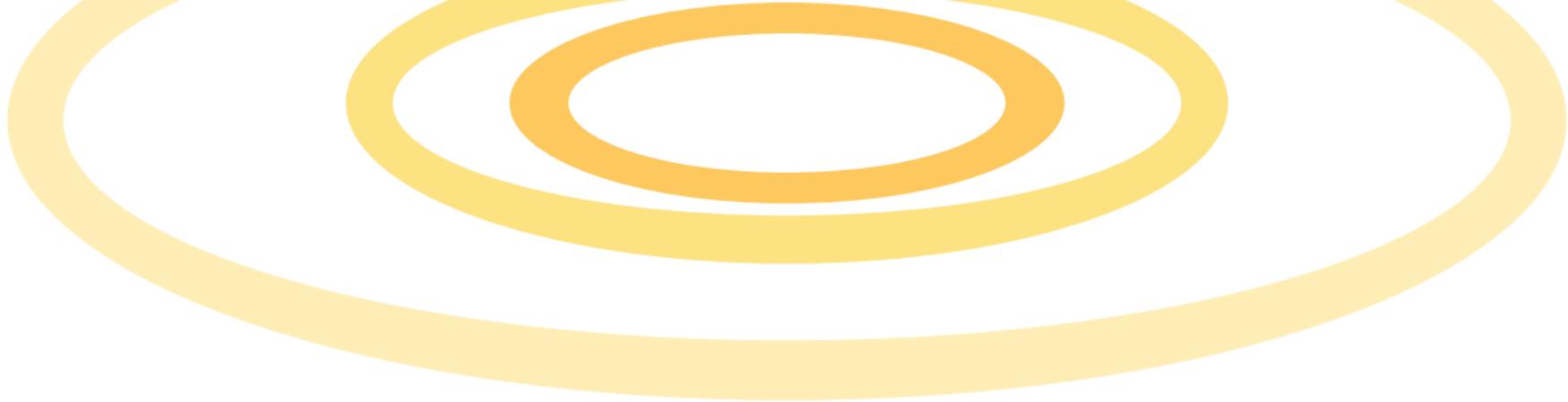


Sell car wash coupons from a local car wash. They give you coupons at a discount and your group makes the profit. Sell tickets any time of year. Extend your fundraiser and raise more money! Contact Terry Todd at Sunset Car Wash (360) 734-1300

## Fundraiser Sites

Host a car wash at a site approved by the city that can properly catch and dispose of wash water. Contact the Public Market downtown at (360) 647-8006 or the Market at Fairhaven on Old Fairhaven Parkway at (360) 715-8565.





## CONTACT:

Whatcom County Stormwater Division 360-715-7450

City of Bellingham Stormwater Education 360-778-7900

Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District 360-734-9224

<http://www.lakewhatcom.whatcomcounty.org>

**Puget Sound**   
**Starts Here.org**

# Don't pressure wash near storm drains!

## Pressure Washing

Water from pressure washing driveways, decks, roofs and house exteriors may contain pollutants. If polluted water is allowed to run into the street and down a storm drain, it will carry pollutants straight into the nearest stream or lake and eventually to Bellingham Bay.



Allowing anything other than rain water to enter storm drains is a violation of Bellingham Municipal Code 15.42.050.



# How can I protect our waterways?

## Follow these simple steps:

- Redirect water onto gravel, lawns, landscaping or where it can soak into the ground. This allows pollutants to be filtered out.



- Don't use chemicals. Replace them with non-toxic cleaners. \*

- If moss-control chemicals are

used on roofs, block or disconnect downspouts and spread water onto nearby vegetation.

- Put a sand bag in the curb line or dig a shallow pit to trap water. Vacuum water with a wet/dry shop vac. Empty water into the sink or toilet.

\* **A Note About Soaps:** All soaps, even biodegradable ones, can harm our waterways if they run into storm drains. If you must use soap outdoors, make sure it's biodegradable and spread the soapy water on gravel or vegetated areas. Soaps can then be filtered out in the ground and will eventually break down in the soil.

For more information, please contact City of Bellingham Public Works (360) 778-7970

