

## RECIPES FOR A CLEANER – GREENER TOMORROW

### Car Washing



A Way You  
Can Make A  
Difference

### Watershed Action Team–Environmental Restoration

For more information on our environmental restoration effort, visit our website at <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/resmgmt/default.asp> or to volunteer for a cleaner, greener tomorrow e-mail us at [ccwater@ccg.carr.org](mailto:ccwater@ccg.carr.org) .

**The shine and sparkle of a clean car makes us all feel good inside.** The process of getting your car clean, in an environmentally friendly way, should make us feel even better.

**FACTS:**

> When you wash your car, most of the dirt that comes off the vehicle contains pollutants; and the wash water and pollutants run directly into storm drains which discharge directly into creeks and streams.

> Runoff associated with car washing (and its pollutant products) promotes weed and algae growth in streams, lakes and estuaries. This in turn can reduce oxygen levels in the water, affecting fish and other aquatic organisms.

> Runoff from outdoor car washing has the potential to result in high loads of nutrients, metals, and hydrocarbons during dry weather conditions.

> Commercial car wash facilities often recycle their water or are required to treat their wash water discharge prior to releasing it into the sanitary sewer system.

**Ways to Make A Difference:**

- ◆ Wash your car at a commercial car wash.
- ◆ Wash your car on gravel, grass or other permeable surfaces.
- ◆ Block-off any storm drains during charity car wash events or use an insert to catch wash water.
- ◆ Use a hose with a nozzle that automatically turns off when left unattended.
- ◆ Use only biodegradable soaps.
- ◆ Pump soapy water from car washes into a sanitary sewer drain.
- ◆ If pumping into a drain is not feasible, pump car wash water onto grass or landscaping to provide filtration.