# When You're Washing Your Car in the Driveway, Remember... You're Not Just Washing Your Car in the Driveway.

All of the soap, scum and oily grit from your car runs along the curb, then into the storm drain and directly into our rivers, bays and bayous. That causes pollution that is unhealthy for aquatic life. You can avoid this by washing your car on the grass or gravel instead of on the street or driveway. Or better yet, take it to the car wash where the water gets treated and recycled.

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

ADEM
Alabama Department of Environmental Management

CWP
Alabama
Clean Water Partnership

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# Help Stop Pointless Pollution

## Be a part of the cleanup of the waterways in our area.

## Clean water is important to all of us.

In recent years, sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now, more than 60 percent of water pollution comes from sources like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from farms and gardens, and failing septic tanks. Each of us can do our part to help clean up our water.

## Why do we need clean water?

Clean water is important to our health and economy. Clean water provides recreation, fish habitat, drinking water, and adds beauty to our landscape. Everyone benefits from clean water.

## What's the problem with car washing?

Many soaps contain phosphates and most car-care products contain chemicals that may harm fish and degrade water quality. The phosphates from the soap can cause excess algae to grow. Algae sometimes looks or smells bad, and may be harmful to water quality. As algae decays, the process uses up oxygen in the water that fish need to survive.

## How can you wash your car and help keep our waters clean?

- Best solution: take your car to a commercial car wash. Most car washes reuse water several times before sending it to the wastewater facility for treatment.
- Use soap that is chlorine- and phosphate-free.
- Use soap sparingly. Use a hose nozzle with a trigger to save water.
- Pour your bucket of soapy water down the sink or toilet when you're done, not in the street.
- Wash your car on a grassy area so the ground can filter the water naturally.

## For more information contact:

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