

## **“GREEN” CAR WASH FUNDRAISING GUIDE** *(Requirements & Options to Compliance)*



The Monterey Regional Storm Water Management Program (MRSWMP) is a regional program with the goal to not only protect local water quality, but improve the quality of the water in our creeks, rivers and Bay. The Members of the MRSWMP include: Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, City of Monterey, County of Monterey, City of Pacific Grove, Sand City and the City of Seaside. The region is a beautiful place to call home. Car washes are a popular means of raising money for worthwhile causes; such as, scout troops, sports teams, schools, charities and for a neighbor in need. However, the runoff from washing cars, if not contained, can harm wildlife and water in our creeks, rivers and the Bay. When conducting car wash fundraisers follow the guidelines below to prevent wash water from flowing untreated to the storm drain system (*gutters, streets and storm drains*) and into the environment.

**THE PROBLEM** – Most storm drains in the area flow directly to our local creeks and rivers which lead to the ocean without any treatment. The only thing that can go into a storm drain is rain water. Anything else that flows into a storm drain violates local municipal codes and State Regulations and can result in fines. **A single fundraising event can pour thousands of gallons of soapy, oily, and gritty water into the environment**, which is unhealthy for water and wildlife.



**TIP** - The best place to hold a car wash fundraiser is at a commercial car wash facility. Commercial car wash facilities recycle and reuse water prior to discharging to the sanitary sewer system. **Call your local car wash to ask if they offer fundraising options for schools, teams, and charities.**

**BEFORE THE EVENT** - If you choose not to partner with a local car wash facility, then selecting an appropriate site for the event is very important. Select a site that drains to a landscaped area on-site, so no dirty wash water will flow off site or contain the wash water to prevent it from flowing off-site. Be sure to check with your local agency first to ensure that the site is suitable for a car wash fundraising event. Also, consider:

- ✓ If you utilize a sump pump system to discharge all wash water to the sanitary sewer system via a toilet or sanitary sewer clean-out then **check with your local Wastewater Treatment Plant for restrictions and limitations\***.
- ✓ **Meet with all participants** to explain proper procedures to follow and duties.
- ✓ **Purchase soaps, cleaners or detergents labeled “non-toxic”, “chlorine-free”, “phosphate free”, or “biodegradable.”** The safest products for the environment are vegetable-based or citrus-based soaps. Biodegradable does not lessen its immediate environmental impact – it means that it will degrade over time if sunlight can reach it. A flush of “biodegradable” soapsuds into a storm drain that has no sunlight to break it down can still impact wildlife and the quality of local water in rivers, which leads to the ocean.
- ✓ **Do not** purchase acid based wheel cleaners or engine degreasers.
- ✓ Purchase waste disposal receptacles (*trash bags for all trash and debris*) in advance.
- ✓ **Spill Kit** – Keep a spill kit on site. Kits include: protective eyewear; protective gloves; absorbent materials; drain covers; and a list of emergency contact numbers. **Have a plan on how to clean up chemical or solvent spills before a spill occurs.**
- ✓ If you elect to release of dirty water to a landscape area, secure owner’s permission first and consider:
  - a. Be sure that the landscape will allow all wash water to absorb completely within 24 hours.
  - b. **Never** allow soapy or dirty water into a vegetated area during or just before a predicted rain event.
  - c. Be sure that the dirty or used water **does not** contain anything that may cause harm to vegetation.
- ✓ **Sweep up all** sediment and debris in the area prior to washing vehicles and dispose into a trash can.



### **DAY OF EVENT**

- ✓ Protect storm drains within 25 feet of the wash area to prevent wash water from entering the drains.
- ✓ **Conserve Water** - Use automatic shut off spray nozzle(s). **Never** leave the hose running. Turn off water when not actively washing.
- ✓ Use a bucket of soapy water for rags or sponges instead of adding more soap directly to rags or sponges.
- ✓ **Do not** use hose-off degreasers. Brush off loose debris and use damp rags to wipe down parts. Use rags or towels for cleaning parts.
- ✓ If using cleaners (*acid based wheel cleaners*) use a rag to wipe them on and off, do not rinse off with water.
- ✓ Wring sponges and wash rags into buckets, not the ground.
- ✓ Always empty buckets into the sanitary sewer system (*sinks or toilets*), **not** on the ground or down the storm drain.
- ✓ Shake car mats into a trash can or vacuum them. **Do not** shake dirt from car mats directly onto the ground
- ✓ **Never** allow runoff to enter the street, gutter or storm drain.

### **AFTER THE EVENT**

- ✓ **Clean up the site following the event** using a broom. **Do not** wash down the site with a hose.
- ✓ Collect and dispose of all trash and recyclables.
- ✓ Sweep the entire site and any paved surfaces that received wash water runoff. Dispose of all sediment and debris into a trash can.
- ✓ Sweep or wet vacuum any remaining standing wash water into a landscaped area or to the sanitary sewer system.

### **QUESTIONS AND / OR CONCERNS:**

Carmel-by-the-Sea (831) 620-2010	Del Rey Oaks (831) 394-8511	Emergency spills 911 / (831) 394-6811	Non-Emergency spills (831) 647-7900
Monterey City (831) 646-3921	Monterey County (831) 755-4800	Hazardous Materials 911 or (831) 755-4511	Sever permits (831) 372-2385
Pacific Grove (831) 648-5722	Sand City (831) 394-1386	Trash & Recycling (831) 647-4201	Ca. Fish & Wildlife 1 - (888) 334-2258
City of Seaside (831) 899-6825	MRSWMP (831) 645-4621	* MRWPCA Wastewater Treatment (831) 883-6126	

### **REMEMBER – MONTEREY BAY BEGINS ON YOUR STREET!**