



“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” — John Muir

When it rains, storm water flows over driveways, lawns, sidewalks, roads and parking lots on its way to the nearest entrance into the storm drain system.

In most cases the storm water system discharges this polluted runoff to the nearest creek, stream or ultimately the river with NO treatment.

This is unlike the water that goes down the toilet or sink in your home which discharges to the wastewater system for treatment.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, polluted storm water runoff is the nation’s greatest threat to clean water.

Storm water pollution is toxic to fish and wetland wildlife.

It threatens all of us who use and enjoy our most valuable resource – WATER!

*Conserving Resources Today For  
Redding's Tomorrow.*



REDDING MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

P.O. Box 496071  
Redding, CA 96049  
Phone: 530-224-6049  
FAX: 530-224-6071  
Email: [ivaste@ci.redding.ca.us](mailto:ivaste@ci.redding.ca.us)  
[www.ci.redding.ca.us](http://www.ci.redding.ca.us)

## Redding Municipal Utilities Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program

### Storm Water Best Management Practices (BMP'S)

## Car Wash Fundraiser

Brochure 3



Car washes are a great way to have fun while raising funds for schools or community groups, and taking care of your environment at the same time.

When soapy water enters the storm drain it flows directly to the nearest creek. Soap (even if it is biodegradable) is a pollutant that can be harmful to fish and other aquatic life. Car wash water can also carry pollutants such as dirt, oil and other automotive fluids into our creeks.

The City of Redding can help you determine an appropriate site to eliminate waste water from entering a storm drain and suggestions on how to dispose of the water.

## How to Keep Car Wash Water from Entering the Storm Drain



Wash vehicles in a place where the natural drainage pattern will route wash water into a vegetated area, such as a lawn or vacant lot. This will provide for natural filtration and keep the soap, dirt and oils out of the storm drain and finally the Sacramento River. Be sure to have the owner's permission if wash water is draining onto a neighboring property. Sand bags, rolled towels, hoses, or other materials may be used to divert the surface runoff to the vegetated area.

Sealing off the storm drain is another way to divert the wash water. Collect the water, and utilize a small sump pump to pump the water to either a vegetated area, or into a sanitary sewer clean out.

### How to seal off a storm drain

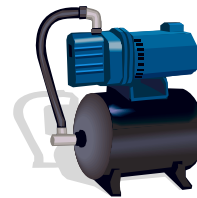


Sealing storm drains in the street is not allowed. Sealing off grated storm entries

and catch basins on private property with the owner's permission is allowed. Remove the grated inlet in the parking lot, and place a sheet of heavy plastic over the inlet that extends beyond the edges. Replace the grate. Then put a heavy rubber mat or a lighter rubber mat with weights on it over the grate. If the grate cannot be removed place plastic sheeting and then rubber mats over the top of it. Rolled up towels can be placed around the edge of the mat to increase its water tightness.

The catch basin in the side of the curb can be sealed off with a sheet of heavy plastic topped with sand bags or other weights. Be sure the seal is tight before you start washing the vehicles.

### How to obtain a sump pump



Sump pumps are available at equipment rental stores. (They are commonly utilized to remove water from basements.) Perhaps someone in your group may be willing to loan theirs out. Sump pumps should only be running when water is available, otherwise the motor will overheat.

## Other equipment needed



A hose will be needed to carry water from the pump to either the sanitary sewer clean out or the vegetated area. An extension cord will probably be needed along with a source of electricity. A broom may also be needed to sweep water towards the pump or the spread the water out so it will evaporate.

## Ending the Car Wash



After all vehicles have been washed a final rinse with water to the sealed drains should be performed. Soapy residue can pollute the creeks and the Sacramento River at the first rain.