

Wash Your Car the Smart Way This Summer

Summer is almost here and Alameda County residents are quick to get out in the sun and wash their cars. But car washing on a paved driveway or road is more than just suds and elbow grease: it can cause water pollution.

How does this happen? Soap, oily grit and chemical residue (like copper, from brake pad dust) wash off your car and into the corner storm drain, polluting the nearest water body. Most soap contains phosphates, which encourage algae growth and harm water quality and fragile ecosystems.

What to do? The Alameda County Clean Water Program asks that instead of washing cars on paved surfaces (such as driveways or roads), to wash over grass or gravel and *without* soap. Even biodegradable soap is harmful to wildlife.

The best option? Take your car to a car wash where water is treated and recycled. And you get to take it easy.

For more tips and information, visit www.BayWise.org or www.cleanwaterprogram.org.