

Think You're Only Washing Your Car In The Driveway?

THINK AGAIN...

Protect the Yough and Mon River Watersheds

www.fayettecd.org



When you wash your car, all the soap, scum and oily grit runs along the curb and into storm drains, then ends up in the Youghiogheny and Monongahela Rivers. This causes pollution which is unhealthy for people and fish. So how do you avoid this whole mess? **Easy.** Wash your car on grass or gravel instead of the street. Or better yet, take it to a car wash where the water gets treated and recycled.



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We All Live Downstream...Help clean-up the Yough & Mon River Watersheds!

It's up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years, "point sources" of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now the number one water pollution problem comes from "non-point sources," things like cars leaking oil, fertilizers washing off fields, lawns & gardens, & failing septic tanks. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem but if each of us does some small things to help, it will add up to a ***pollution solution!***

Why do we need clean water?

Clean water is of vital importance for our health, economy & environment. Each of us benefits daily from clean water & each of us have an important role in protecting our waterways both now & in the future. The Youghiogheny & Monongahela Rivers provide us with recreation, fish & wildlife habitat, drinking water & commercial opportunities not to mention being the strong hold of our beautiful landscape. By keeping our lakes, rivers, ground waters & wetlands clean, we ensure our own healthy & happy existence.

What's the problem with car washing?

There's no problem with washing your car, it's just how & where you do it. Most soap contains phosphates & other chemicals that harm fish & water quality. The soap, together with the dirt & oil washed from your car, flows into nearby storm drains which run directly into streams, lakes & rivers. The phosphates from the soap can cause excess algae to grow. Algae look bad, smell bad & harm water quality. As algae decay, the process uses up oxygen in the water that fish need to survive.

What can I do?

- 💧 Wash your car on a grassy area so the ground can filter the water naturally.
- 💧 Use soap sparingly & try to use non-phosphate detergents.
- 💧 Use a hose that is high pressure, low volume & has a pistol grip or trigger nozzle to save water.
- 💧 Wash one section of the car at a time & rinse it quickly.
- 💧 When you're done, empty your bucket of soapy water down the sink, not the street.
- 💧 Best of all, take your car to a commercial car wash, especially if you plan to clean the engine or the bottom of the car. Most car washes reuse water several times before sending it for treatment at a sewage treatment plant.

For more information:

For more information on storm water runoff pollution prevention contact the Fayette County Conservation District at (724) 438-4497 or check out the following websites: www.fayettecd.org, www.dep.state.pa.us, www.epa.gov and/or www.stormwatercenter.net.



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