

Storm Water Management Program

for Clean Creeks and Waterways

How to hold a car wash without polluting our creeks



The Storm Water Management Program is sponsored by the City of Chico

Have you ever wondered where the oil goes that makes driving so dangerous after the first rainfall?

Or what happens to the detergent that runs down the driveway when you wash your car?



When you wash a car in the driveway, parking lot, or street...

- Oil and Auto Fluids
- Cleaning Products
- And Dirty Water



Are carried through city gutters and into storm drains, and from there into the nearest creek or river...

So how does it work?

Unlike the water that goes down a sink or toilet in your home, stormwater is **untreated** and **flows to waterways and groundwater.**



Storm drains were built for storms



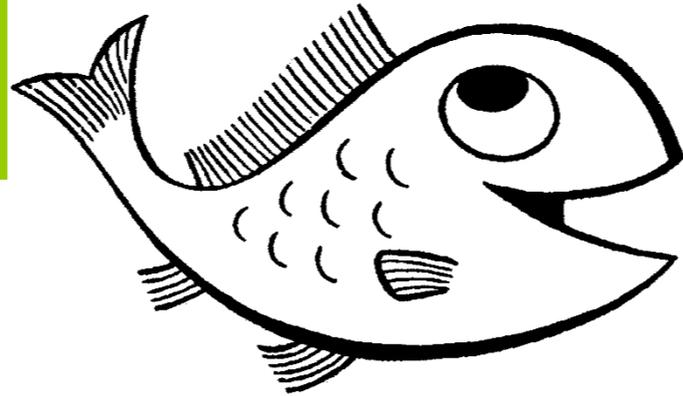
- Storm water systems were originally intended to route rainwater quickly off the streets during a heavy storm.

Pollutants can include:

- Pesticides
- Litter
- Cigarette butts
- Pet waste
- Chemicals
- SOAP (from Car Washes!)

- Unfortunately, these systems can carry pollutants such as pesticides, soap, auto fluids, bacteria, litter and chemicals through city streets and straight to our creek waters.

IMPORTANT FACTS



- **Used oil from a single oil change can pollute up to one million gallons of freshwater.**
- **One ounce of household bleach requires 2,437 gallons of water to be safe for fish.**
- **One ounce of biodegradable detergent requires 156 gallons of water to be safe for fish.**

All by itself...

- Your car wash may not seem to be contributing that much.
- But collectively, each of these car washes, done on a regular basis, contributes some very serious pollution.

Part II

Are you planning a Car Wash Fundraiser?

- It is admirable to help your school, and/or club, raise money for worthy causes.
- We only ask that you please remember to protect our creeks and wildlife while you wash cars to raise money for your club or school.



If you choose to do a car wash fundraiser...



You can prevent the wastewater from running into the gutters by holding the car wash on a lawn or gravel area where ALL of the wastewater soaks into the ground.



Before the Car Wash –

Hold a meeting with all the car wash volunteers to explain how to protect our creeks while working at the car wash fundraiser.

Remove all trash and debris from the car washing area.

Or...



- Check out a car wash fundraiser kit from the City of Chico. The car wash kit contains equipment that you can use to block off the storm drain and divert wastewater to areas where the soapy/dirty water can soak into the ground instead of flowing into the gutters, and into our creeks.

Setting up the car wash kit...

- Place a cover over the storm drain



The car wash kit keeps wastewater from flowing into the gutter

- A green-colored dam in a U-shape can be placed in front of the covered storm drain.
- This creates a barrier that the waste water cannot pass through.



Next you place the pump inside of the U-shaped dam and hook one end of the hose to the pump.



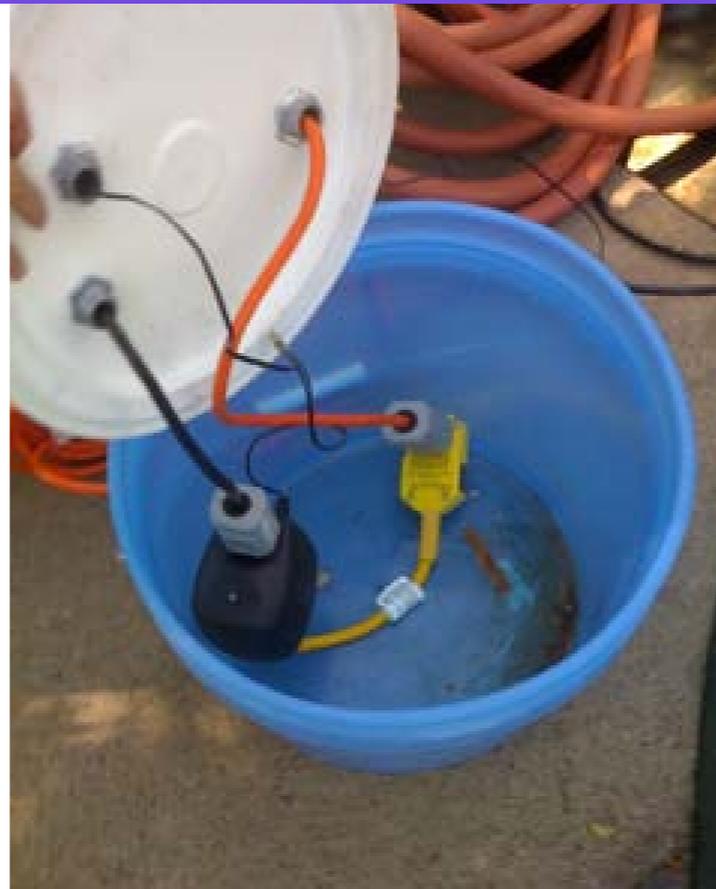
Make sure that the other end of the hose is placed in an area where ALL of the water will soak into the ground.

The pump needs electricity to work...



The car wash kit provides a bucket that you can store the hooked-up electrical components in, which makes it safer for everyone.

First, you will run the extension cord and the cord for the pump, through the two fitting holes in the bucket lid.



Plug the pump into the yellow GFI extension inside of the bucket. The extension cord will then plug into the opposite end of the GFI extension.

Lastly...

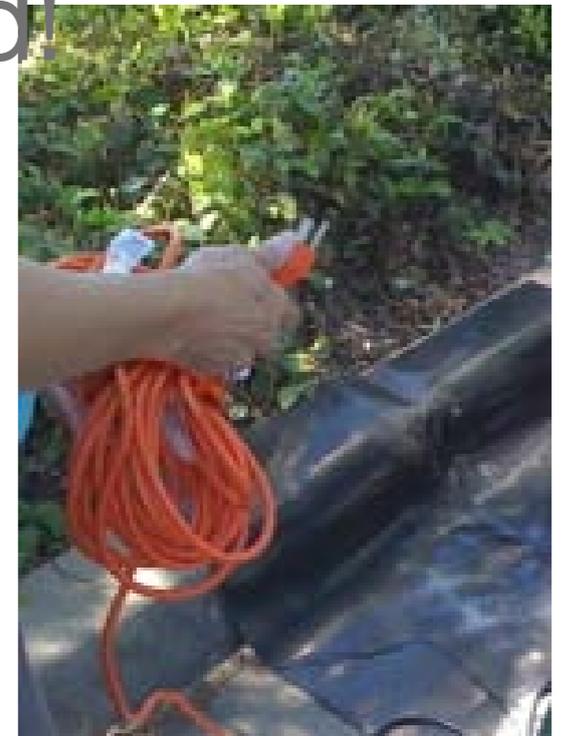
Put the lid on the bucket securely and place it on the other side of the dam, with the extension cord running in the opposite direction of the dam and the water collection point, to the power source.

It is very important to keep the electrical cords away from the water at all times.



Never...

- Never allow any vehicles to drive over the electrical extension cord. Please take extra care to protect the cord!



To Borrow the Car Wash Kit..... Contact the City of Chico

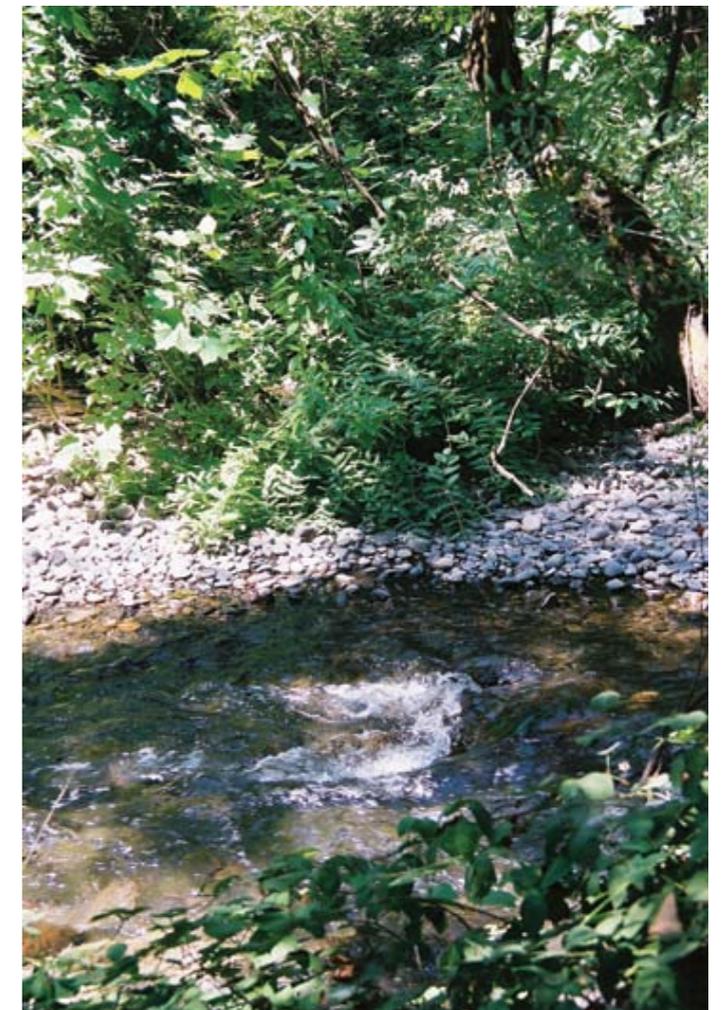
879-6950

- A \$500 deposit is required in the form of a check.
- The check will not be cashed if the kit is returned with everything in good condition.
- Your club or group supervisor will need to sign a waiver form.

Part III

Here's **OTHER WAYS** you can help
to keep our creeks clean:

- You can be creative with new fundraising ideas:
- Ask a local commercial carwash to donate a part of the days proceeds or see if they will allow you to market a special wash ticket.



Did you know that...

Professional Car Washes Use Water Safely and Efficiently?

- The Clean Water Act requires professional car washes to pipe their dirty water to water treatment facilities or into state-approved drainage facilities designed to protect the environment.
- Automatic and self-serve car washes also use water efficient equipment that conserves water resources!

Other Fundraising Ideas

- Ask neighbors to donate items for a flea market.**
- Ask local merchants if they would pay to have their business flyers distributed.**
- See if you can get sponsors to pledge money for a park or creek clean-up.**
- Hold a fundraising bowling or golfing event.**
- Sell environmentally friendly products (reusable shopping bags, Klean Kanteens, etc.)**

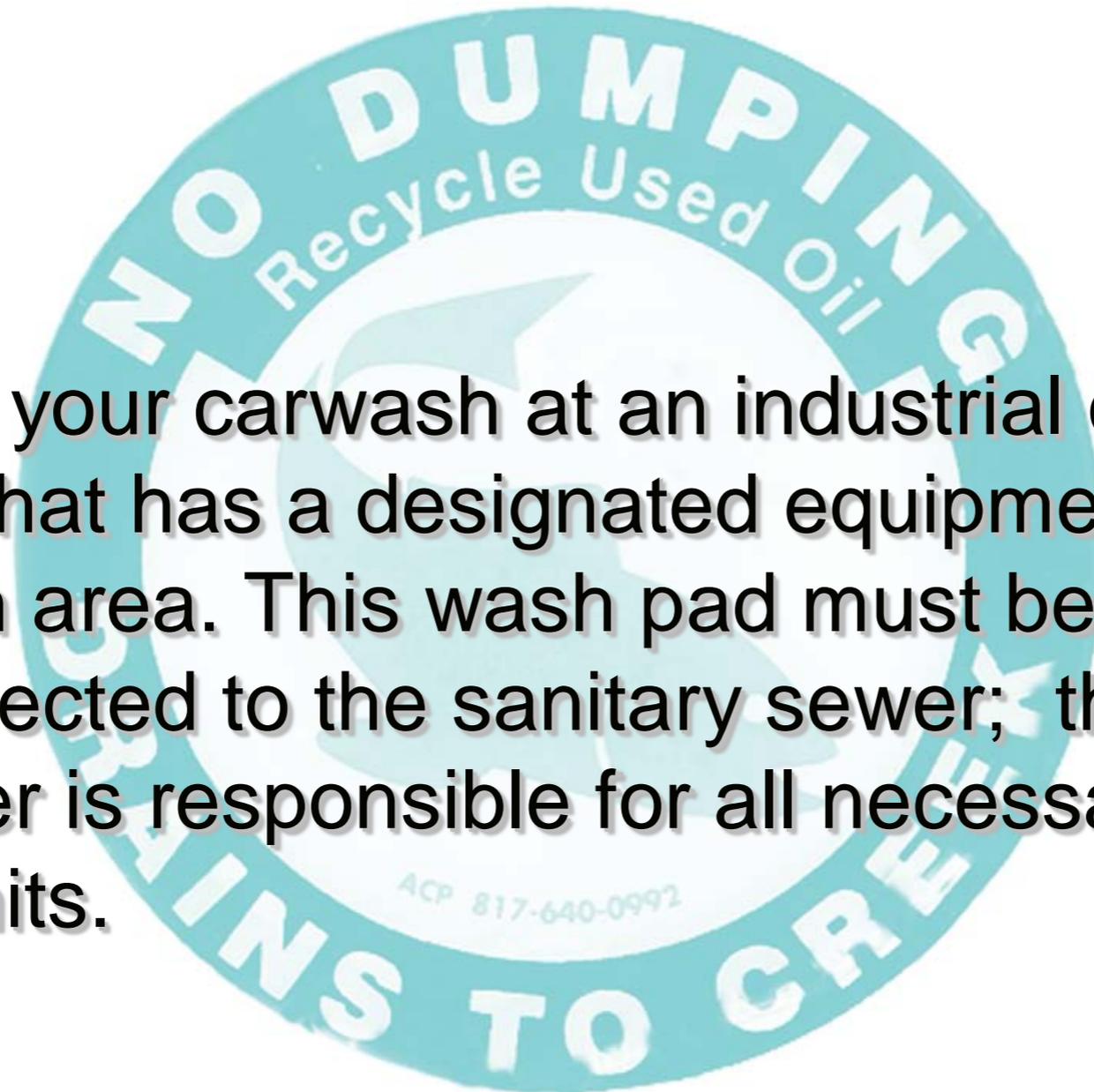
Or...

Find a sponsor for your carwash that uses a closed loop washing system, recycles water, and discharges wash water to the sewer.

Do not hold your carwash at a facility that is not properly equipped. **Popular host sites, such as service stations and parking lots usually do not have the necessary connections to the sanitary sewer.**

Or...

- Hold your carwash at an industrial or commercial site that has a designated equipment/vehicle wash area. This wash pad must be directly connected to the sanitary sewer; the property owner is responsible for all necessary discharge permits.



During the car wash:

Remember that even environmentally friendly products should not be allowed into the storm drain system!

-Use only cleaners labeled “non-toxic,” “phosphate free,” or “biodegradable”, and follow the directions carefully.

-The safest products for the environment are vegetable-based or citrus-based soaps.

-Do not use acid based wheel cleaners or engine degreasers.

-Conserve water by using a spray nozzle with an automatic shut off, and shut off the hose when not in use.

After the car wash:

- Always empty buckets into the sanitary sewer system (e.g. sinks or toilets), or an appropriate area where water will soak into the ground.

Appropriate areas include grassy, landscaped, dirt or gravel areas that will allow the water to soak into the ground, rather than running off into the gutters and storm drains.

Before you allow anything to go into the gutter or storm drain, stop and think...



Storm drains do not go to the sewer, they flow directly into channels and creeks, through wetlands and to the ocean.

- **The fish, beaver, raccoons, birds, insects ...and people thank you for making the effort to keep our creeks clean!**



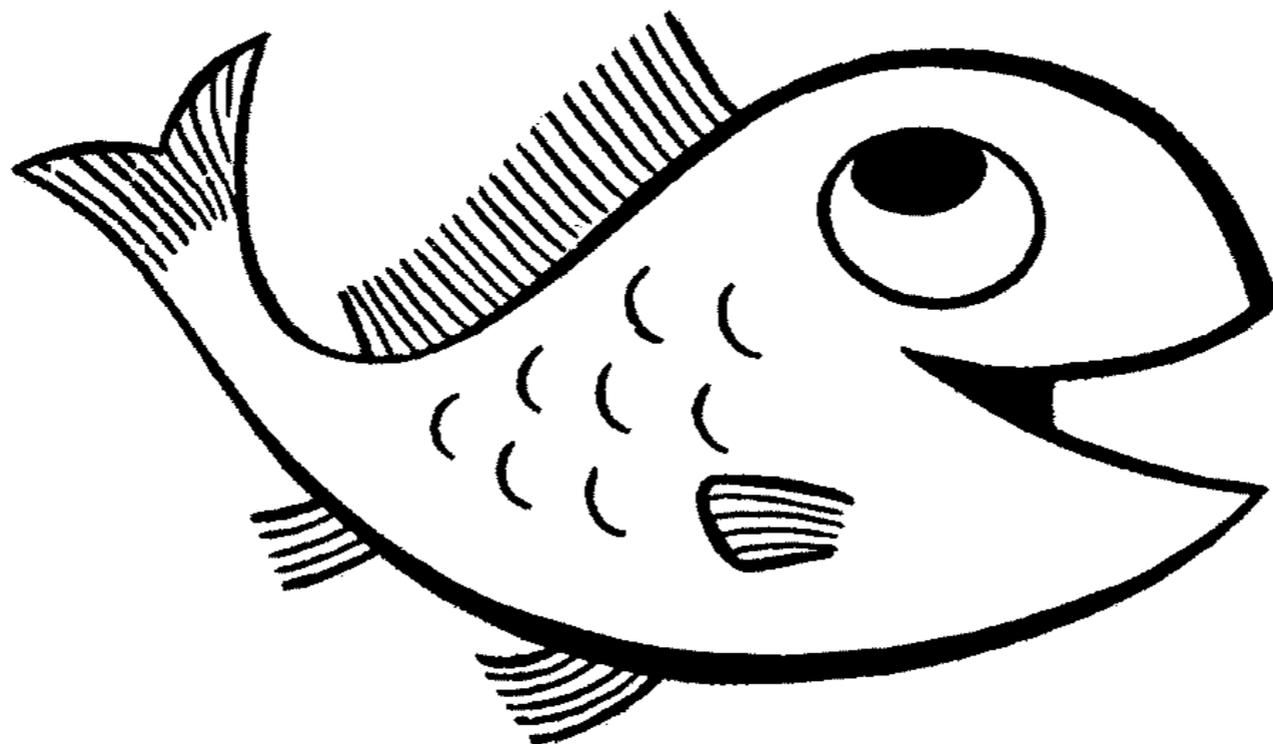
SUDS BUSTERS

WITH CAR WASH KITS



Remember...

Soap is for dishes, not fishes! If it isn't rainwater, it doesn't belong in the gutter!



Visit

www.keepchicoclean.org

And learn more about how you can help to keep
our creeks clean



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