

Guide to MS4

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

May 2023 Edition



Working at the Car Wash...

There are more and more carwashes popping up in the area. Did you know that a car wash has a positive environmental impact on a community, more so than washing your vehicle at home.

Did you know, washing your vehicle at a car wash can save at least 50% of the water that you would use to wash that same vehicle at home? A car wash uses approximately 45 gallons of water per wash. that same car wash can reuse that water for another vehicle. There are over 100,000 car washes in the United States. Environmentally friendly car washes are popping up all over the United States. An environmentally friendly car wash could be capturing and reusing water, using biodegradable cleaning products, or even using a waterless cleaning system.

Environmental Impacts

- The amount of water used by hand washing a car at home can be 80-140 gallons of water.
- Car washes can be required to recycle their water.
- Even if water is not recycled, the car wash is required to dispose of used water in the sewer system and not in the storm drains.
- Washing your car in the street or anywhere that the water goes to a storm drain is placing all those contaminants directly into the Chesapeake Bay.
- Vehicles often have pollen, zinc from tires, copper from brake pads, motor oil and gasoline along with other heavy metals picked up from roadways.

