



PROJECT
CLEAN WATER

Santa Barbara County

(805) 568-3456

**For more information about clean water,
or to report spills or polluted runoff, call**

1-877-OUR-OCEAN

Preventing Pollution in our Creeks and Ocean



A Guide for Automotive Detailers

Provided by the County of Santa Barbara's
Project Clean Water

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Do you know where water on the pavement goes?

Some people think that runoff from the streets on the South Coast flows down storm drains to our local wastewater treatment plant. This is a common misconception!

Anything that enters the storm drains flows to the creeks and ends up in the ocean. This includes pollution from auto detailers.

Our oceans and creeks are being polluted.

Used motor oil, bacteria, toxic chemicals, heavy metals and other types of pollution have been found in local creeks and the ocean. Pollution can be unsafe for people and affect aquatic life. As a result of pollution, beaches have been closed to protect public health.

What’s Causing the Pollution?

In our area, the sanitary sewer system and the storm drain system are separate from each other. Storm drain system openings (catch basins) are located outside in gutters, alleys and streets. The storm drains empty directly into creeks, which flow to the ocean.

All materials, such as liquid and trash, that are poured, spilled or dumped on streets, alleys and gutters enter the storm drains. This waste travels into creeks and the ocean **without being treated.**

To keep the ocean and creeks clean it is very important that only rain goes down the storm drain!

All other discharge to the storm drain must be prevented.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Contact Information

*All numbers are in the 805 area code unless otherwise noted.

Buellton Wastewater Treatment Plant.....	688-5177
Carpinteria Sanitary District	684-7214
Cuyama Community Services District (CSD)	(661) 766-2780
Goleta Sanitary District	967-4519
Goleta West Sanitary District.....	968-2617
Guadalupe Wastewater Treatment Plant	343-1340
Laguna County Sanitation District (Orcutt)	739-8750
La Purisima Wastewater Treatment Plant (Mission Hills)	733-4366
Lompoc Regional Wastewater Reclamation Plant	736-1617
Los Alamos CSD	344-4195
Montecito Sanitary District	969-4200
Santa Barbara City El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant	897-1910
City of Santa Maria Wastewater Treatment Plant	925-5022
Santa Ynez CSD	688-3008
Solvang Wastewater Treatment Plant.....	688-6997
Summerland Sanitary District	969-4344
Vandenberg Village CSD	733-2475

Hazardous Waste Disposal Contact Information

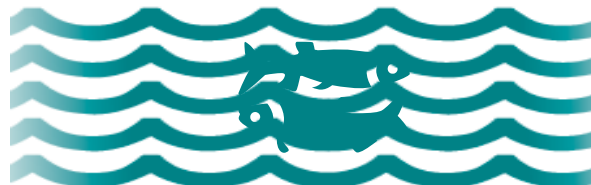
*All numbers are in the 805 area code.

CEC/UCSB Hazardous Waste Collection Ctr.	963-0583 x.104/105
County of Santa Barbara Fire Department (HazMat)	681-5500
County of Santa Barbara Solid Waste Management	882-3600
North County Hazardous Waste Disposal	882-3615

Recycling Wash Water

- ❑ If the soil is dry, wet it down before discharging to help the wastewater soak into the ground.
- Any remaining soapy water (for example, in a bucket) should be vacuumed up and then discharged into the sanitary sewer system or distributed over a dirt or gravel area.

Recycling wash water is environmentally the best solution, and for businesses such as car detailers, it can be the most economical one. A Closed Loop Wash Water Recycling System can be used by both mobile and onsite cleaners to reclaim wash water. Wash water is collected and pumped through a combination of oil/water separators, coalescers, and filters to clean the wash water. This water is then stored until needed. Systems are also available that automatically deliver the collected water to a pressure or steam-cleaner for re-use. By treating wash water onsite (or with a mobile unit) and reusing it, detailers are able to reduce metered water usage, which may reduce overall water and sewer utility charges.



We Need Your Help!

Are your business practices sending pollution to the beach?

Storm water runoff from auto detailers contributes to urban runoff pollution. Soap, oil, grease, heavy metals and solvents are some of the pollutants that get into the storm drain system.

Preventing these pollutants from entering the storm water system is vital to clean creeks and open beaches.

Also, *Title 16 Liquid and Industrial Waste Disposal* of the *City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code* prohibits anyone from discharging pollutants into the storm water system.

By using good site management methods, you can help prevent pollution in our creeks and ocean.

The common sense measures outlined in this booklet can be implemented with little effort and at a reasonable cost to auto detailer operators and owners.

Solution: Best Management Practices

Owners and operators of auto detailing businesses can apply Best Management Practices (BMPs) to their daily activities. These “good housekeeping” practices can significantly reduce their contribution to storm water pollution.

The BMPs that follow are keyed to specific activities, and describe recommended management practices to control pollutants from specific activities.

Dumping anything into a creek, gutter or storm drain is illegal.

Wastewater from auto detailer activities should be discharged at a wastewater treatment plant with pretreatment, such as oil, grease and metals removal.

Check with your local sanitary district before discharging ANY wastewater into the sanitary sewer system.

(See contact list on page 11.)



Site Cleanup



Dry Cleanup. For spills in an unconfined area, focus on dry cleanup first to decrease the use and disposal of wash water. Use rags to pick up small amounts of wastewater or spilled cleaning and detailing products. Take care not to saturate the rags. Dispose of solid debris (no liquid waste) in the garbage.

Wet Cleanup. For spills in a confined area, or where dry cleanup does not suffice, use wet cleanup methods. Wet cleanup should follow the guidelines listed below.

- Use a storm drain cover to prevent all wash and rinse water from entering a storm drain (such as plugs, rubber mats, vacuum booms, containment pads or temporary berms). **Absolutely no wash water (whether or not it is soapy) can enter the storm drain system.**
- Recycle or dispose of all wash water from mobile cleaning operations in the sanitary sewers **(with permit)**.
 - ❑ Wastewater from the mobile unit should first be discharged into a mobile pretreatment unit, such as a sand and grease interceptor/ separator, prior to being discharged into the sanitary sewer at the site of collection or at another proper location.
 - ❑ If no such disposal option is available, the collected wastewater should be returned to the business site for disposal.
- A less preferable option is to direct wastewater (preferably wash water that contains no detergent or other cleaning agent) to a landscaped, dirt or gravel area. **Do not use this option just before or after a rainstorm.** Be aware that this wastewater may adversely impact the surrounding landscaping, and follow the guidelines listed below.
 - ❑ Permission must be obtained from the owner or appropriate agency prior to disposal.
 - ❑ Wastewater should be directed onto an area large enough to contain all of the water.
 - ❑ Check the slope and other physical characteristics of the area to avoid runoff to the street or storm drain.

Carpet Cleaning

Foam carpet cleaners are recommended by most detailing experts and are easily contained. However, care should be taken that no residues are washed into storm drains.

Floor Mats

When washing mats outside of the vehicle, wastewater must be contained and disposed of safely and legally (see Washing Site and Site Cleanup for more information).

Vinyl

Although biodegradable products are often recommended for cleaning vinyl surfaces, such as dashboards and interior doors, they are harmful to fish and other aquatic life and are not permitted down storm drains. Use soap and water for cleaning vinyl surfaces instead. “Saddle soap,” used by horse caretakers, is a good alternative, as it does not dry out vinyl (a primary concern with chemical cleaners).

Wash Water and Cleaner Spills

Make sure all workers know what to do in the event of a spill outside of the buffered work area. Small spills and drips from cleaning products and wash water can be cleaned up with rags (do not saturate rags and avoid paper towels). Take rags to a permitted commercial laundry facility after use.

For medium- & large-sized spills of wash water, clean up using a vacuum or mop and bucket. As a last resort, contain the liquid then clean it up using absorbents. Do not hose down an area to clean or handle a spill, unless the liquid will be completely contained, cleaned up and disposed of appropriately for the waste type.

Petroleum Spills

Large hazardous spills should be contained and then cleaned up using absorbent materials (such as a petroleum-selective absorbent). Petroleum-selective absorbents will clean up the hazardous material and leave the wash water behind. While these absorbents are expensive, they last a long time. Absorbents contaminated with petroleum are not allowed in the trash; they must be disposed of as a hazardous waste. Take care to properly dispose of all used absorbents.

Auto Detailers

Many auto detailers have mobile operations that take them to both residential and commercial locations within the county. The disposal of cleaning solutions or soapy water associated with auto detailing into gutters and storm drains contributes to the degradation of our local creeks and beaches, even if the soaps or cleaners are labeled nontoxic or biodegradable.

Wastewater from auto detailers cannot be discharged into storm drains.

Target Area

Pollution Prevention

Best Management Practice

Place vehicles waiting for service in a covered area or place a drip pan under each vehicle to prevent toxic materials from making their way to the pavement. Drip pans need to be removed when it is raining to prevent accumulation of rainwater or accidental overflow.

Take care before beginning any work to prevent any spills of cleaning agents or wash water from exiting your work site. Create a cleanup plan prior to beginning work and know how to follow it.

- Label cleaner containers and store them in a covered area to prevent contact with rainfall. Periodically inspect these areas for improper labels, leaky containers, drips, spills and aged materials.
- Post a Spill Cleanup Plan inside mobile auto detail units.
- Place spill cleanup materials in highly accessible locations inside the unit, and ensure that the proper cleanup and containment materials are available. These can include rags, absorbents, absorbent pads, oleophilic pads (absorb oil but not water or detergents), drip pans, absorbent booms to contain spills, and storm drain covers.
- Fix leaks in company vehicles. Automobile fluids leaked onto streets get washed down storm drains when it rains.

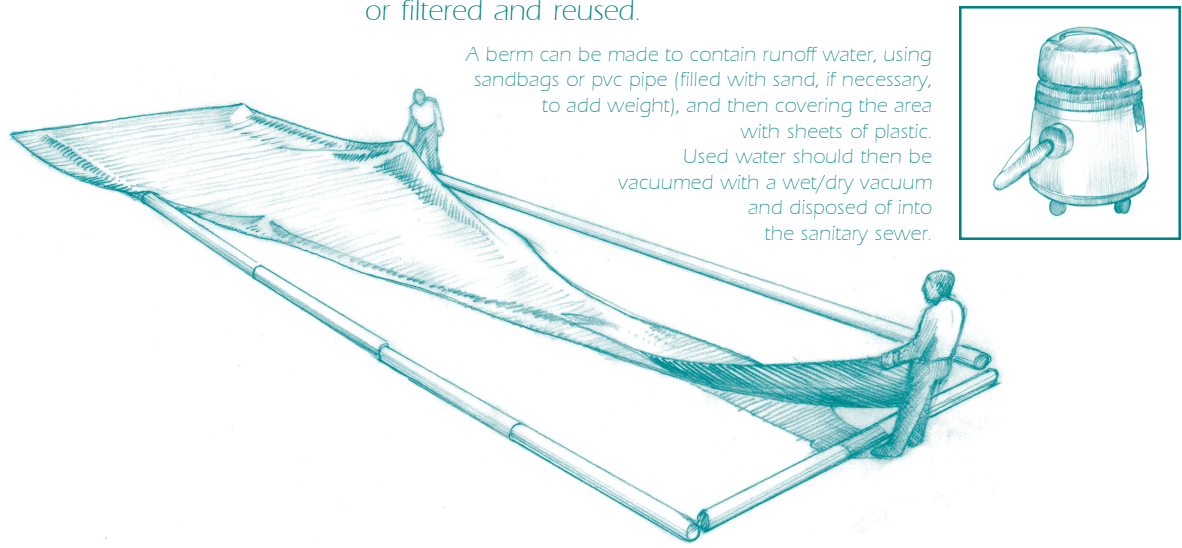
Washing Site

Have a designated wash area that is properly designed to discharge into the sanitary system in accordance with existing regulations. Wash areas should have signs indicating where and how washing must be done. Wash vehicles in a covered, contained bay where the water can be collected and recycled.

Never let dirty, soapy water run off of your wash area!

**Washing Site
cont'd**

- One option is to use a berm and vacuum system, which allows cars to be washed without moving them. Berms can be purchased or built using a vinyl discharge hose filled half way with sand. Berms should be placed around vehicles prior to washing, and should ensure that no washwater can escape. A vacuum should then be used to suck up any washwater that gathers within the berm. Many vacuum units are available which filter and store the washwater for reuse.
- Another option is the vacuum boom. The vacuum boom uses a hollow flexible snake to act as a dam around the washing area. One end of the hose is connected to the boom and the other end to a vacuum source, such as a portable wet vacuum unit (industrial vacuums are available for this use). The boom seals against the pavement and forms an impervious barrier to water flow. Air and wastewater are rapidly drawn into small slots on the boom and conveyed through the hollow boom and vacuum hose to the holding tank in the vacuum unit. Discharge resulting wastewater into the sanitary sewer system **(with permit)**.
- A last option, for use at locations where vehicles may be moved for cleaning, is a washing mat. This method requires that vehicles be driven onto a platform with high edges that prevent washwater from escaping. Resulting washwater should be vacuumed and discharged into the sanitary sewer or filtered and reused.



A berm can be made to contain runoff water, using sandbags or pvc pipe (filled with sand, if necessary, to add weight), and then covering the area with sheets of plastic. Used water should then be vacuumed with a wet/dry vacuum and disposed of into the sanitary sewer.



Soaps

If possible, consider using only hot water for washing. If you choose to clean with water and a cleaner, use a mobile washing unit that has a runoff containment system, such as a berm and vacuum system (as previously described). Choose the least toxic soaps, detergents and cleaners, and avoid those with phosphorus. Please note that even biodegradable cleaners are toxic to aquatic organisms. Consider using cleaners developed for arid areas that use little or no water.

Auto Parts

Scrape parts with a wire brush rather than liquid cleaners. If necessary, arrange drip pans, drying racks, and drain boards so that fluids are directed back into the sink or the fluid holding tank.

Engines & Wheels

Never use engine degreasers or toxic wheel cleaners for mobile operations. These products typically contain petroleum-based solvents and can be highly corrosive. Even water-based cleaners used on dirty parts will pick up toxic metals like lead, cadmium, copper, and zinc, along with oils and grease. Thus, it is best to take vehicles to a professional or “self-service” car wash that has the capability to degrease and pressure wash with hot water. This wastewater will be pretreated on-site through a clarifier, and then treated at a wastewater treatment plant.

Engine cleaning and steam cleaning should be done on your site only if you are equipped to capture all the water and additional wastes. Remove all oil and grease in an oil/water separator or other pretreatment unit before discharge. If you steam clean, use an enclosed bay where the condensed steam can be collected in a sump and treated before discharge.

Bug & Tar

The solvents used to remove stubborn grit and tar from car bodies and windshields are not allowed down storm drains, as they are harmful to aquatic life. Use cloths to apply and remove these materials, then take to a permitted commercial laundry facility for cleaning.

Glass Cleaning

Most glass cleaners contain ammonia, which stimulates abnormal algae and plant growth. Some cleaners also contain alcohol and a variety of detergents. Avoid using chemical glass cleaners. Mix equal amounts of water and vinegar in a spray bottle to clean glass surfaces.

Vacuuming

Dispose of all debris removed from a vehicle in a trash container. Do not sweep debris into the street or parking lot.