

The River Begins at Your Front Door

Although convenient, pressure washers can release harmful contaminants into our local waterways. Motor oil, soaps, fertilizers, and other contaminants can be picked up by wash water and carried to storm drains. Once in the stormwater system, this polluted water travels untreated to our local rivers.



By using the tips in this guide every time you pressure wash, you can prevent pollution and enhance habitat for fish and other organisms that live in our waterways.

Working together to protect our community's waterways



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Protect Our Rivers While You Wash



Your Guide to
**Environmentally Friendly
Pressure Washing**

How Does Pressure Washing Impact Our Rivers?



- Pressure washing vehicles, machinery and other heavy equipment can dislodge metals, oils and grease that can poison aquatic life.
- Increased sediment makes water cloudy, hinders aquatic plant growth, and can clog fish gills.
- Large amounts of pet waste, fertilizers, and detergents can lead to algal blooms which create dangerously low levels of oxygen, inhibiting the growth of aquatic plants and harming fish populations.

Under Springfield Municipal Code 4.372, discharges from any property that enter the local stormwater system, other than uncontaminated stormwater, are considered illicit discharge violations.

Follow These Steps Every Time You Pressure Wash

1. Before pressure washing, always use dry cleanup methods:

Use absorbents such as kitty litter or saw dust on oils, grease and any other fluid.

Sweep materials (including yard debris and absorbents) into piles, which can then be disposed of in the trash.



2. Block storm drains with oil-absorbent booms, socks or towels to filter wash water runoff.



3. When possible, direct the flow of wash water to a lawn, gravel or landscaped area where the water can slowly be filtered and absorbed.

4. After washing, clean up debris that may have been captured in your absorbent boom, sock or towel and dispose of it in the garbage.

More Tips for Pressure Washing Projects

- ✓ Collect paint chips.
- ✓ Latex paint chips can go in the garbage.
- ✓ Paint on older buildings and homes built before 1978 may contain lead, and these paint chips must be disposed of properly as hazardous waste.

Never use soaps, detergents, chemicals, steam or heated water of any kind while pressure washing if the wash water could enter a storm drain, street gutter, or waterway! Even biodegradable soap is toxic to many types of aquatic life.

- ✓ Wash vehicles on a lawn, landscaped area, or gravel if possible.
- ✓ Never wash engines, transmissions, or undercarriages of vehicles in a driveway, street or any other surface where the wash water could flow into groundwater or the stormwater system.
- ✓ Use commercial car washing facilities which are plumbed to the sanitary system (i.e. goes to the wastewater treatment plant).