

If you wouldn't drink it, don't dump it!

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WaterWatch



Spill Prevention and Clean Up

There are many substances that are stored in and around homes that can be environmentally harmful. Items such as motor oil, antifreeze, fertilizers, pesticides, paints, stains and varnishes could all potentially pose health risks for families.

What if one of these chemicals were accidentally spilled on your property or near your home? Could you handle the cleanup? A little bit of time and effort could help you be prepared to take care of a messy situation.

Spill Prevention

All hazardous household materials should be stored in areas of access limited to adults. Keep chemicals in

their original containers or properly label them if you store them in your own container.

Another precaution to take is to purchase only the amount you need for a job. Know the amount of wall area for a painting job or the lawn area for fertilizing. This will limit the amount of material left to store when the job is done.



Properly dispose of or recycle oil and automotive fluids promptly. You can take these chemicals to many local auto parts stores or bring oil and anti-freeze to the City of Orem Public Works Complex at 1450 W 550 N for recycling.

To dispose of paint, first take stock of the leftover paint. Could it be used for another project? Could a neighbor, friend, scout group or someone else still use the paint? If so, put the paint to use. I had someone suggest to me that you could paint a large cardboard box so your kids could have a playhouse. If the remainder cannot be used, it is time to let it dry. You can purchase a paint thickener at a paint

(Continued on back)

Car Washing

Cars that are washed in the street or on the driveway can pollute our rivers and lakes. The soapy water that runs off the car into the gutters, goes into the stormwater system.

Stormwater, unlike the water which enters the sewers, does not undergo treatment before it is discharged into our waterways. Any pollutants in storm water ends up in our lakes, rivers, or groundwater.

How big is the problem?

While it may seem rather mundane, the waste water that runs off a car when it is washed contains a range of substances that may pollute the environment. These include soaps and detergents, mud, rubber, metals, oil, antifreeze, other automobile fluids and grease.

If these substances enter the stormwater system, they will eventually find their way into canals, the Provo River,

Utah Lake or wherever the stormwater discharges. In addition, this stormwater has the potential to contaminate groundwater, which is one of the most important sources of drinking water for the City of Orem

There are approximately 350,000 vehicles registered in Utah County. If every vehicle was washed once a month from April to October with 10 gallons of water each time, nearly 21

(Continued on back)

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We're on the Web!
www.orem.org

Car Washing

(Continued from front)

million gallons of polluted water could enter the storm water system every year.

Commercial car washes

Using a commercial car wash may also be helpful in limiting pollution and water use.

Commercial car washes treat waste water before disposing of it in the sewer. Also newer commercial car washes recycle and reuse some of the water in their 'do it yourself' car wash bays.



Spill Prevention and Cleanup

(Continued from front)

store or you could place the paint in a protected location with the lid off and let it dry. Once paint is dry, it can be disposed of with the regular trash.

Spill Cleanup

Here are some helpful tips if you do have a spill. First, never hose down a spill. Always use dry cleanup methods.

For very small liquid spills, a paper towel can be very useful. You can also use rags or an absorbent such as kitty litter. Dry the spill as best you can. If you have an oil spill, put the rag or

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 such as computer controlled systems and high-pressure nozzles and pumps, allowing them to clean cars thoroughly while conserving water.

Check whether your car wash company recycles its water.

When you wash your car at home

Here are some suggestions to minimize the discharge of pollutants and to save water during this time of drought.

- Use a trigger nozzle on your hose, or even better, use a bucket to save water.
- Use detergents and soaps sparingly. Choose soaps that are biodegradable. Or you might choose to just use plain water, a coarse sponge and a little elbow grease.

towel in a plastic bag before disposing of it. Kitty litter can be thrown away in the garbage without the protective wrap.

If you wind up with a spill that is too big for you to handle, you can call police dispatch at 229-7070 or if someone is in danger due to the spill,



- Empty your bucket onto your garden or lawn.

Where to wash your car

If you are washing your car at home, try to wash your car on your lawn to minimize the runoff. Consider pulling your car onto the lawn or wash your car in the driveway if it drains onto a lawn or garden area. Avoid using the driveway if the water runs into a street.

Always ensure the area where you wash your car does not drain into gutters or storm drains in the street.

If you have no suitable area to wash your car, look for an alternative location. Perhaps your friends or neighbors have a suitable area you can use.

Sources:

http://www.stormwatercenter.net/Pollution_Prevention_Factsheets/CarWashing.htm

<http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/envirom/carwash.htm>

<http://www.waterworkscarwash.com/pro.htm>

<http://www.carwashes.com/envirom/>