

## Think Before You Wash

Preservation of the environment is a major topic in the world today, especially as it relates to automobiles. Have you considered that these topics can also be applied to the seemingly simple task of washing your vehicle? **Yoe Borough**, as an MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) municipality, would like to help outline the best and most eco-friendly way to keep your vehicle shining like new.

Today, the "greenest" way to wash your car is to take it to an automatic car wash. Studies show that an automatic car wash uses roughly half the water the average person would use while washing with a traditional bucket and hose. Regulations are also in place that require commercial carwash systems to contain and collect the dirty water used during a wash cycle. This waste water is then cleaned and, in many cases, reused.

It can be argued that the most effective way to shine up your vehicle remains to be hand washing but it can be far from environmentally friendly. The main reasons for this are the excessive use of water and the release of harmful substances such as soap residue, oil, acid and metal particles into the storm sewer system while washing and rinsing. If you do plan to wash at home, your first step is to get automotive soap and cleaners that are biodegradable and nontoxic. Secondly, avoid washing on the pavement, which will let the wash water drain directly into a storm sewer. Storm sewers drain directly to streams or lakes and carry pollutants with them to these waters. Washing over grass or gravel that will absorb the water into the ground to reduce or eliminate the environmental impact is best.

Please keep this information in mind as you preserve the long-term appearance and value of your vehicle while also being environmentally friendly. Happy washing!

