



*For the Professional
Vehicle Wash Industry*

NC Professional Carwash Association

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Dear Property Owner or Manager:

It has been brought to our attention that mobile for-profit car washes may be operating on property that you either own, lease or manage and therefore you have responsibility for preventing pollutants from entering the waters of the United States. Section 301 of the Federal Clean Water Act prohibits a point source discharge of pollutants into waters of the United States without an NPDES permit and this action is considered a violation of the Federal Clean Water Act. Washing vehicles is an example of a process water discharge of pollutants requiring an NPDES permit.

The most common form of non-compliance is to discharge the process water into a storm sewer system or into a city street that drains to a storm water inlet. Most storm drainage systems discharge directly to the waters of the United States without treatment, which means that discharges into a storm drain, is the same as putting it into the water body receiving the storm drain discharge. This letter serves as a reminder that storm drains in streets and parking lots flow directly to streams, rivers, lakes and the ocean without any type of treatment. No one is allowed to dump waste of any kind onto street surfaces, drainage pipes and ditches, or into storm drains – they are only for rainwater.

EPA recommends that companies or individuals take their vehicles to properly operated car washes that discharge all of their water to a municipal sanitary sewer that treats the wastewater before discharging from the water treatment plant to waters of the U.S. We encourage you to review the activities allowed on your property and take appropriate measures to ensure that non-compliance with the Clean Water Act is not being allowed to occur. If you do allow Car Washing on your property YOU are responsible to see that an appropriate containment system is in place in the area utilized for washing cars.

There are several suppliers of containment systems. One example can be found at www.detailking.com/water-reclamation.html. Before you purchase any system, be sure it is in compliance with your municipalities' requirements.

Thank you,

NC Professional Car Wash Association