

**SYSTEMS:  
STORM DRAIN VS SANITARY  
SEWER**

**Storm drain and sanitary sewer systems have two distinct functions. It is very important to understand the difference**

Catch basins are the entryway into the **Storm Drain System** and are typically located at the bottom of a hill or at street corners. This system collects and transports water and other liquids away from these areas and out to a local water body untreated. The Storm Drain System *does* not remove pollutants from water before it is discharged into streams and rivers.



**The Sanitary Sewer System** collects wastewater from indoor plumbing such as sinks, toilets, washing machines, and floor drains where it is transported through underground pipes to a sewage treatment plant. The treatment plant removes many pollutants from wastewater before it is discharged back into a river.

**NO DUMPING!**

*Lodi Municipal Code Section 17.40.030 (C)(1)* –carwash events are exempt from temporary use permits as long as it meets criteria listed below.

C. Exempt temporary uses. The following minor and limited duration temporary uses are exempt from the requirement for a Temporary Use Permit. Uses that do not fall within the categories defined below shall comply with Subsection D. (Allowed temporary activities), below.

1. Car washes for fund raising. Car washes, limited to a maximum of two days each month for each sponsoring organization, on non-residential properties. Sponsorship shall be limited to educational, fraternal, religious, or service organizations directly engaged in civic or charitable efforts, or to tax exempt organizations in compliance with 501 (c) of the Federal Revenue and Taxation Code.

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**MAKE YOUR NEXT  
CARWASH  
FUNDRAISER  
“ENVIRONMENTALLY  
SMART”**

*Help keep pollutants out of  
the storm drain system.*

*A good housekeeping guide  
for Lodi's non-profits, schools  
and civic organizations.*

**LODI STORMWATER**



**MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Tel: 209-333-6740

## STORMWATER POLLUTION SOLUTIONS

### RAISE MONEY AND PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S WATERWAYS

**THE PROBLEM:** Holding a car wash is a popular way to raise funds for various organizations but all too often, while they help the organization, such car washes hurt the environment. That's because they are often held in public parking lots that drain into the stormwater system, which leads directly into nearby streams, creeks, and rivers.



Soap suds, oil, grease, and other contaminants are washing into the curb and end up polluting local waterways. Putting these materials into the storm drain is the same as dumping them directly into the Mokelumne River, or any nearby stream or wetland.

Dirt, grime, oil, soap, and other car wash residuals are harmful to fish, wildlife, and plants that grow in and around waterways. Even biodegradable soap causes trouble because when it enters a waterway and begins to degrade, it uses up oxygen needed by fish, plants, and other marine life. It's important to avoid using cleansers that contain

phosphates, chlorine, chlorine bleach, nitrates and ammonia.

**THE SOLUTION:** By planning ahead, your car wash fundraiser can be both fun and profitable for your organization, as well as respectful of our local water resources. Some options on how to conduct an environmentally- friendly car wash are listed below. In all cases use a flow-control device such as a hand spray with an on/off hose trigger to conserve water.

#### **OPTION #1 HOLD YOUR CAR WASH IN A GRASSY FIELD INSTEAD OF A PAVED PARKING LOT.**

Wash all vehicles on a permeable surface such as a grassy or gravel lot, using biodegradable, phosphate- free soap. Soil and plants help to filter out toxins before they seep into groundwater. Never allow wash water to enter the storm drain system.



#### **OPTION #2 BLOCK STORM AND DISCHARGE TO SANITARY SEWER.**

Putting together a diversion kit to prevent pollutants from entering the stormwater system is another option. This kit would include a rubber mat and a sump pump. Most hardware and home improvement stores should carry these items. The wash water would be pumped into the sanitary sewer with the property owners permission. A pre-inspection to confirm electrical GFI hookup, storm line location and size, and sanitary sewer discharge location should be performed prior to scheduling your location.

#### **OPTION #3 FIND A SPONSOR FOR YOUR CAR WASH THAT USES A CLOSED LOOP WASHING SYSTEM.**

Preferably you want one that recycles its water. These are generally industrial and commercial sites designated with an equipment/vehicle wash area. Wash pads must be directly connected to the sanitary sewer system. The property owner is responsible for all necessary discharge permits. Do not hold your car wash at a facility that is not properly equipped. Popular sites such as service stations and parking lots usually do not have the necessary connections to the sanitary sewer.