

# Vehicle Maintenance

## Best Management Practices for the Auto Owner



### How does my vehicle affect the local waterways?

Did you know each year in the United States, an estimated 180 million gallons of used oil are disposed of improperly? That's sixteen times the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez! Improper disposal of auto fluids included dripping, spilling, or pouring them onto the ground. Did you know that storm drains are not connected to the sanitary sewer systems and treatment plants? Whatever enters the catch basins in our parking lots and roads goes untreated into our creeks, streams, rivers and lakes!

## What Can You Do?

Proper use and disposal of auto fluids is an easy way to prevent stormwater pollution and protect our lakes and streams.

### Maintenance Best Management Practices

- Drain fluid into a drain pan
- Use a funnel to pour fluid into a plastic container
- Recycle your oil filter
- Poke holes in it and let it drain into your oil pan for several hours first
- Dispose of radiator fluid properly
- Do not flush your radiator where fluids may flow into a street, gutter or storm drain
- Use plastic tarps and drip pans when your car is leaking and you are working on it
- Fix leaks as soon as possible
- Use sawdust or cat litter to soak up spills
- For small spills, sweep the material up, bag it and put it in the trash
- For large spills, take the material to a Household Hazardous Waste Disposal center or collection day (visit [www.uwex.edu/erc/hazwste.html](http://www.uwex.edu/erc/hazwste.html) for a list of Household Hazardous Waste facilities and programs)
- Do not drain or pour any auto fluid onto the street or into a storm drain
- Do not mix coolant with any other auto fluids. They are not recyclable when mixed
- Do not hose down your work area



### Washing your vehicle

- Use a commercial car wash that recycles water or discharges it directly to the sewer for treatment
- Wash your car on a lawn, gravel driveway, or area where soapy water will not run into a street or storm drain
- Use Soapy water sparingly if you must wash your car at home - even biodegradable soap is toxic to wildlife
- Pour your bucket of soapy water down the sink when you're done
- Use paper towels to wipe brake dust off of wheels before washing
- Choose a work area that is easy to clean up, with an impervious floor if possible
- Do not use spray on wheel cleaners or rinse tires off if rinsewater will flow into the street or storm drain

Modified from the City of Monterey Public Works—Stormwater Management Program

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