



Wash your vehicle on unsealed ground to prevent discharges to the stormwater system

## The Law

### The Polluter Pays

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is a law designed to protect our environment. It is illegal for any substance to be discharged into natural water, the stormwater system, land or air unless authorised by a resource consent or a district or regional plan. Polluters can be fined up to \$1,000, issued abatement notices, or prosecuted and fined up to \$600,000 for breaching the RMA.

**Landowners:** you are responsible for any work on your land. Make sure the contractor you hire knows how to do the job properly.

**Employers:** you are responsible for the actions of your staff. Make sure you train them well and give them the proper tools to do the job correctly.

**Workers:** you are responsible for doing the job in a manner that does not breach the environmental protections put in place by your employer. If you cause pollution, you and/or your company could be held liable for clean-up costs and/or penalties.



**Report all spills immediately to the Pollution Response Hotline on 09 377 3107**

Phone 09 301 0101 or visit [aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](http://aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)



# Vehicle and Equipment Washing

## Preventing Pollution in Our Waterways



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## What's the Problem?

### Wash Water Damages the Environment

Wash water from vehicle and equipment washing can contain a variety of pollutants including detergents, dirt, oil, concrete, fuel residues, metals, paint and more.

The cumulative effect from these pollutants causes serious damage to our environment:

- Contaminating waterways
- Poisoning aquatic wildlife
- Damaging aquatic habitat
- Degrading aquatic environment due to lack of oxygen and sunlight



**When washing vehicles and equipment, it is important to prevent the discharge of any contaminants into the stormwater system or natural watercourses such as streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries and the sea.**

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## What Can You Do?

### Washing Your Vehicle and Equipment

There are ways to prevent discharges from entering the stormwater system when washing vehicles or equipment.

**NOTE: Biodegradable detergents still pollute the environment.**

#### **Divert your wash water**

- Wash vehicles or equipment on unsealed ground such as gravel or grass
- Use sandbags to divert run-off to unsealed ground

#### **Minimise the amount of wash water created**

- Use a high-pressure, low-volume system
- Conserve water when washing by using a trigger hose or bucket

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## Community Car washes

A large quantity of vehicle wash water is created at fundraising car washes. It is essential that this wash water does not enter the stormwater system.

Before washing begins, you can:

- Cover and block any stormwater catchpits
- Divert wash water to unsealed ground or ask Watercare for permission to discharge to the sewer system
- Block the catchpit outflow and remove excess water with a wet-vacuum.

If you cannot find a suitable location, check with local self-serve car wash businesses and ask to use one of their stalls to conduct the car wash fundraiser.

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## Washing Earthmoving Equipment

Sediment is a major pollutant in the Auckland region. If it enters the stormwater system, it will end up in our streams, estuaries and sea where it can cause serious damage to the environment and natural habitat.

### What can you do?

Make sure you wash your earthmoving equipment in a manner that the sediment laden run-off does not enter a stormwater catch pit or natural waterway:

- Wash equipment on site if a designated wash down area is provided
- Wash onto gravel or unsealed ground
- Invest in a permanent wash bay if washing occurs on a regular basis

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## Commercial Operations

### **Install a permanent wash bay**

- Wash bays should be fully bunded and covered by a roof
- Apply for a network consent from Watercare to discharge wash water to the sewer system
- Maintain wash bay regularly to ensure best results

### **When using these,**

- treat them like any other potentially harmful chemical
- do not apply or wash them off without containment in place
- make sure they do not enter the stormwater system.