

## Why should we be concerned with wash water disposal?

Wash water from mobile cleaning is NOT just dirt and water. It may also contain soaps, toxic chemicals, heavy metals, oil and grease that are harmful to our creeks and waterways.

Pollutants draining from mobile cleaning activities are washed into the street and into the storm drain system, which then flows to our creeks and eventually Monterey Bay without any cleaning or filtering.

Federal, State, and local regulations **prohibit discharge of anything but rain water in the storm drain.**

Implementing the proper Best Management Practices (BMPs) is easy and is required for compliance with State and local storm-water pollution prevention regulations.



## What about biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products?

Cleaning products labeled “nontoxic” and “biodegradable” can still harm wildlife if they enter a storm drain system. Fish, for example, are affected by both regular soap and biodegradable soap! However, if disposed of in the sanitary sewer system, the wash water is treated at a wastewater treatment plant instead of discharging to local waterways.

## Plan Ahead

- ◇ Determine where you will discharge wash water before starting a new job.
- ◇ Be sure to have equipment on hand (i.e. long hoses, sump pump, etc) for directing discharge to sanitary sewer access points or to landscaped areas.



## Options for Wash Water Disposal

**Never** drain wash water into streets, gutters, parking lots, or storm drains.

- ◇ Wash water can usually be discharged to the sanitary sewer through a drain at the property owner’s home or business, such as a utility sink, floor drain, mop sink, or toilet.
- ◇ Direct wash water to landscaping or gravel surfaces. Wash water must completely soak into vegetation before you leave the site.

## Doing the Job Right Checklist of BMPs

- ◇ Walk the area to identify storm drains
- ◇ Sweep the wash area to remove debris.
- ◇ If feasible, wash on a vegetated or gravel surface where wash water can infiltrate into the ground without runoff.
- ◇ Contain wash area so that water does not drain down streets and gutters—use gravel bag berms, wattles, or bermed mats.
- ◇ Block or seal off any storm drain inlets and sloping areas that release water to the storm gutter to prevent wash water from entering the storm drain.
- ◇ Put storm drain protection in place before starting the washing process and remove before you leave the site.
- ◇ Vacuum or shake floor mats into a trash can.
- ◇ Minimize water use; use nozzles on hoses.
- ◇ Use less-toxic cleaning products (wash without soaps and solvents, if possible)
- ◇ Use a “wet-vac” to vacuum up the contained wash water for proper disposal.

## Three Steps to Remember Before You Clean

**1. Be a “Recognized Mobile Cleaner**  
Take the online “mobile surface cleaning” training from BASMAA. This program will train you on how to clean different surfaces in an environmentally acceptable way and publish your name as a trained cleaner.

Visit: [www.basmaa.org](http://www.basmaa.org).

### 2. Ask Your Local Inspector

Contact a City stormwater inspector to determine specific discharge requirements. Obtain permission to discharge to the property owner’s sanitary sewer port or landscaping before starting the job.

### 3. Divert and Collect Wash Water

Cover the storm drains to prevent wash water from entering and divert wash water to the sanitary sewer system if permitted to do so. Small amounts may be diverted to landscaped areas.



## Protect the Bay and Yourself

When wash water flows into storm drains it goes straight to local creeks and eventually the Monterey Bay.



If you discharge wash water generated by mobile cleaning activities to the City’s storm drain system, **you are violating municipal stormwater ordinances and may be subject to a fine.**

### [Local Water Pollution Control Agency](#)

Monterey One Water (831) 372-3367

### [For More Information](#)



Salinas Maintenance Services Dept.  
(831) 758-7233

# MOBILE BUSINESSES

Best Management Practices  
(BMPS)



This brochure provides information about using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent polluted water from entering the City of Salinas storm drain system.

### [Who Should Use this Brochure?](#)

- ◇ Automobile Washers or Detailers
- ◇ Power Washers
- ◇ Steam Cleaners
- ◇ Charity Car Washes