

Responsible Power Washing

A power-washer is often used for painting preparation or cleaning the house after remodeling. The problem is there is a lot besides water in the runoff from power or pressure washing. If the wastewater is not collected properly, all of this pollution will flow into a storm drain. Water entering a storm drain is not treated or cleaned before entering our creeks and rivers.

Always pre-clean the area by sweeping up litter, dirt, and other debris.

Typically the best option for disposing of wash water is to collect and dispose the wash water to the sanitary sewer through a sink, toilet or sewer clean out. This will ensure the wash water will be sent to the wastewater treatment plant for treatment and reuse. If hazardous materials (petroleum products, fuels, antifreeze, solvents, and pesticides) are involved, the water will need to be disposed of as hazardous waste and cannot be discharged to the sanitary sewer.

Collect water for disposal by creating a barrier with sand bags or seal the storm drain openings with rubber mats. Wastewater can be collected from its containment using a wet/dry vacuum or a sump pump.

Rinse the area to ensure any pollutants left on the pavement will be picked up.

Use rags or an absorbent material like kitty litter to remove any oil, grease, or other petroleum products leaked or staining any pavement. Collect the rags and absorbent material for disposal at the Household Toxics Facility. Discharging power washing waste water to a landscaped area may be allowed if no soaps are used. Pre-cleaning and blocking the storm drain is always required. When routing wash water to landscaping, check the slope and area to be sure you will avoid runoff into a street or gutter. If the soil is very dry, wet it down thoroughly before discharging so that wash water will soak into the soil instead of running off to the street, gutter, or storm drain. The planted area must be able to absorb all the water you divert to it.