



Vehicle Washing

Best Management Practices



What is Stormwater Pollution?

Stormwater is rain and snow melt runoff that travels over surfaces that are not permeable such as asphalt or concrete.

Stormwater pollutants accumulate in Skagway's streets and are flushed into storm drains during rain and snow melt events. Some storm drains have oil water separators, which capture toxic substances, but others lead water directly to Pullen Creek or the Skagway River unfiltered. Many people are unaware that polluting is both an active and passive activity. Pollution includes:

- Water from washing vehicles, tools, and equipment
- Spills from automobiles and storage areas
- Erosion from cleared land
- Pet waste

National, state, and local laws that regulate discharges and dumping into U.S. waters support the goals of the Clean Water Act through permits and fines. In some communities, local laws include a set of Stormwater BMPs; in others, BMPs are voluntary actions that help uphold local laws that promote clean water.

Local Ordinances

In Skagway, clean water standards are addressed through Titles 8 (Health and Safety) and 10 (Vehicles and Traffic) of municipal code. These titles prohibit littering, washing contaminated water into storm drains, and neglecting to clean up vehicle fuel and oil spills on the streets.

Vehicles

Oils and greases from residential vehicles collect on driveways and streets where they are washed into storm drains.

- Check for and fix vehicle leaks regularly
- Use drip pans to collect liquids during maintenance
- Dispose of liquids in the proper place: The Skagway Small Boat Harbor collects used oil, antifreeze, and batteries and disposes of them without damaging ground or surface water
- Be prepared to clean up after leaks when they do occur. Cat litter will soak up liquids. The litter can then be disposed of in the garbage

Vehicle washing on hard, compact surfaces increases runoff on the streets. Detergents can contain toxic substances and wash water is full of soaps, oils, greases, and particles from vehicle emissions.

- Wash cars and boats over permeable surfaces such as lawns or aerated soils
- Use soaps that do not contain phosphorus: this nutrient causes overgrowth of algae
- Avoid washing underneath
- Set aside a commercial vehicle washing area containing filtration systems for pollutants
- Use soaps that are phosphorus free
- Do not sweep the accumulation of dirt or used wash water into streets or gutters



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