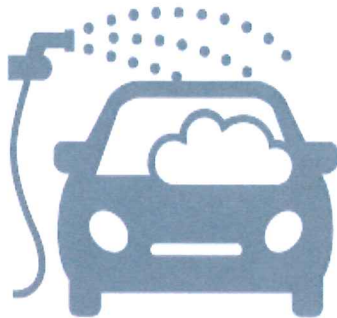




# Best Management Practices

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## Mobile Car Washing



Companies involved in mobile car washing need to be aware of environmental regulations that apply to them. This fact sheet outlines requirements for managing wastewater from mobile car washing operations.

Wastewater from car washing can contain contaminants including detergents, caustic or acidic cleaning compounds, petroleum products, metals, and grit. Unlike site-built car wash facilities, which are required to install and maintain oil/grit interceptors to treat wash water prior to discharge, mobile car washing services are potentially contaminating Cayman's groundwater by discharging wash water directly onto the ground or into stormwater drains.

**Wastewater from car washing is considered "trade effluent" under Water Authority Regulation 19 and cannot be discharged into or onto the ground without treatment to prevent the discharge of toxic or harmful substances.**

### **DISCHARGE OF UNTREATED WASTEWATER FROM MOBILE CAR WASHING IS A VIOLATION OF WATER AUTHORITY LAW.**

In the Cayman Islands, storm drains are vertical boreholes that discharge into groundwater at a depth of 20 to 100 feet below the ground's surface. Groundwater eventually mixes with near-shore waters and, if contaminated, poses a risk to both ground and marine water resources. In addition, the dirt and grit contained in the wash water can plug storm drain wells, causing flooding during wet weather.



To reduce the amount of pollutants reaching storm drains and groundwater resources, mobile carwash services are required to employ the BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs) outlined on the flip-side of this flyer.

## Frequent Questions

### **What about biodegradable cleaning products?**

Just because a product is labelled as "biodegradable" it does not mean that it is harmless and can be discharged onto the ground or down a storm drain. Biodegradable products can still harm water quality and aquatic life while they break down and with the by-products they leave behind.

So, the message to remember is this: "biodegradable" products are typically better for the environment than conventional products, but they still cannot be discharged onto the ground or into storm drains.

### **Can I wash my car at home?**

Yes. Homeowners too should follow best practices, but the regulation specifically applies to commercial operators.

### **Why is the Water Authority now applying wastewater requirements to mobile services?**

Unlike site-built car wash facilities, applications for mobile car wash services are not subject to the Planning process which includes review by the Water Authority for wastewater requirements. This gap has resulted in the spread of mobile services without adequate oversight, and an increasing number of complaints about the practice.

The Water Authority endeavours to regularise the industry through educational outreach to licenced mobile car wash services and to office and commercial facilities that accommodate these services on their lots. We coordinate our efforts with the Departments of Commerce and Industry and Environmental Health who licence and inspect the mobile car wash services.

PO Box 1104  
Grand Cayman  
KY1-1102  
Cayman Islands

Phone: 345-949-2837 (94-WATER)  
Fax: 345-949-0094  
E-mail: [info@waterauthority.ky](mailto:info@waterauthority.ky)  
[www.waterauthority.ky](http://www.waterauthority.ky)

The Water Authority was established in 1983 as a statutory body responsible for supplying wholesome and affordable drinking water to the people of the Cayman Islands. The Water Authority is also responsible for the proper treatment of wastewater and for the protection of the fresh groundwater lenses that exist throughout our islands.



# Best Management Practices

## Mobile Car Washing

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### GENERAL

- ✓ Train all employees about wash water discharge requirements and the BMPs to comply with the requirements.
- ✓ Minimize water use by using high-pressure, trigger-spray wash wands and by keeping equipment in good repair.

### CLEANING SUPPLIES

No solvents or degreasers should be used for vehicle washing. Not only do these contaminate groundwater, they can damage paving.

Only soaps with the following characteristics should be used, at the recommended concentrations:

- ✓ No phosphates
- ✓ No petroleum-based surfactants
- ✓ pH range from 5.5 to 9.5

### BEFORE WASHING

- ✓ Sweep the wash area to remove debris and place in the trash bin.
- ✓ Protect storm drain inlets by placing an oil-absorbing filter over or around it in a manner that ensures all wash water passes through the filter before going down the storm drain. If necessary, use sand bags or berm mats to direct the flow. See examples and sources below.
- ✓ Shake floor mats trash bin before washing, to minimize the amount of grit contained in the wash water.
- ✓ Use paper towels or rags to wipe any oily areas before washing with soap and water. Place soiled towels or rags in a trash bin.

### BEFORE LEAVING THE SITE

Remove the filter from the storm drain, being sure to contain all collected grit and debris.

If basic oil absorbent pads are used, they are single use and shall be placed in a plastic bag for disposal. If a more durable filter is used, all grit and debris shall be deposited in a trash bin and the filter stored in a plastic bag for future use. The filter shall be replaced and disposed before its oil absorbing capacity is spent.



## Storm Drain Filter Products

Note: the following are provided for reference and do not constitute or imply an endorsement of one product or source over another.

### Basic Oil Absorbent Pads



These can be sourced locally. If used, a means to anchor them in place is required to ensure that the wash water passes through (not under or around) the filter before discharging to the well. These are single use and must be disposed, along with the grit and debris collected, in a trash bin.

### Drain Filter Socks for Oil and Sediment



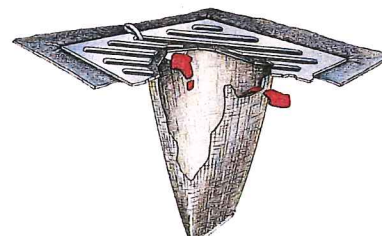
FLT710

Filtrexx® FilterSocks with PetroLoxx™

[www.newpig.com](http://www.newpig.com)



### Drain Guard Inserts: Oil and Sediment Model



[www.absorbentsonline.com](http://www.absorbentsonline.com)

