

Remember, You're Not Just Washing Your Car

Did you know there are over four million vehicles in Southeast Michigan? With that many cars and trucks, we all need to practice good car care to protect our lakes and streams.

How does caring for your car affect our waterways? Storm drains found in our streets and roadside ditches lead directly to our lakes and streams. If dirty water from washing our cars gets into the storm drain, it pollutes our local waterways. This “dirty” water contains pollutants such as grease and dirt, and the soap itself contains phosphorus, which can lead to excessive algae growth in our lakes.

What can you do? Simple.

- **Make a date.** Car-wash facilities treat their dirty water before discharging it to our lakes and streams. So, make a date to take your car to a car wash.
- **Wash it—on the grass.** If you wash your car at home, consider washing it on the lawn. The lawn will gladly soak up the soapy, dirty water preventing it from entering storm drains or roadside ditches. If you can't use the lawn, try to direct the dirty water towards the lawn and away from the storm drain.
- **Minimize it.** Reduce the amount of soap you use or wash your car with plain water.

For more easy steps on protecting our lakes and streams, visit www.semcog.org or contact Buildings and Grounds at (734) 419-2160. Remember, it's our water is our future - and it's ours to protect.