

Hotspot Best Management Practices



Maryland
Department of
the Environment

**Maryland Department of the Environment
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PAVEMENT/ BUILDING WASHDOWN

As buildings age or spills, dirt or grime accumulate, pressure washing the surfaces creates a cleaner looking property. But this same dirt and grime in the washwater can also pollute local streams and rivers.



Frequently Asked Question: “Am I able to power wash a building/ pavement/ concrete parking lot without potentially harming the environment?”

Answer: [Yes.] Most pressure washing uses little water so the potential for pollution discharge is minimal. However, be sure to follow these guidelines:

- Plan to **monitor** the operation to be able to **filter/dispose of any debris** from the wash
 - Use **filters** to avoid wash water flowing into nearby bodies of water
- **AVOID** using **soaps**, bleach and/or other cleaning chemicals
 - If using soaps, plan to collect and haul the wastewater away or send it to the sanitary sewer
- Direct to groundwater/ sanitary sewer system, if applicable

Contact the Maryland Department of the Environment if:

- The operation will be occurring at the same location for an extended period of time
- The operation will potentially impact a nearby waterbody

VEHICLE WASHING

When vehicles are washed on impervious surfaces such as parking lots or industrial areas, dirty wash water can contaminate stormwater that ends up in streams.

Washwater that seeps into the ground or is discharged into a subsurface disposal system such as a septic system, dry well, seepage pit or drainage hole can contaminate groundwater. Improved washing practices can be used at any facility that routinely washes vehicles.



Question: “Am I able to wash a fleet of company cars on the company grounds?”

Answer: [Yes.] However, be sure to follow these guidelines:

- Wash all vehicles at commercial car washes or indoor facilities that are specially designed for washing operations
- If the site is not properly equipped for vehicle washing, **ensure vehicle washwater is collected**, contained in a holding tank, and either reused onsite or transported offsite for appropriate treatment and disposal
 - **If collection is not feasible**, use filters at nearby stormwater drains
 - **If collection is not feasible**, ensure vehicle washwater is discharged to a public wastewater treatment (sanitary sewer) system

Contact the Maryland Department of the Environment if:

- Wastewater from vehicle washing will be discharged onsite to groundwater or surface water
- The operation will be occurring at the same location for an extended period of time
- The operation will potentially impact a nearby waterbody

BRIDGE DECK WASHING

Bridge Deck Rinsing is a preventative maintenance task which is intended to be performed on a recurring basis in order to protect bridge decks against corrosive effects of chlorides and the accumulation of de-icing chemicals on bridge surfaces throughout the winter.



Question: “Will this project potentially impact water bodies across Maryland?”

Answer: This is a fairly new concept for the State of Maryland, however to gain more knowledge, the Department has required a preliminary study of the wastewater associated with this activity. While awaiting the results of the study, the following best management practices have been implemented:

- **Use of soaps/detergents is prohibited**
- To the extent practicable, **direct rinse water to storm drains or groundwater for filtration**
 - Filter rinse water for any debris (implement use of filter rolls, hay bales, sandbags, and/or any other material used as a sediment trap at the scuppers on the bridge deck)
- **Trash** and debris must be removed and **disposed of properly** prior to rinsing
 - Appropriate removal of material may be accomplished via manual and/or mechanical means

Contact the Maryland Department of the Environment for more information.

Contact the Maryland Department of the Environment

Industrial and General Permits Division at (410) 537-3323

Helpful Links

[Vehicle Washing General Permit Website](#)