

# CAR WASH



## Be an Everyday Environmental Hero!

Be **AWARE**, take **ACTION**, report **ACTIVITIES**  
that adversely affect streams, drainage channels and the ocean.

### BE AWARE:

When it rains, car fluids such as oil, break fluids, exhaust fumes and heavy metals run off into storm drains, streams and the ocean. In addition, large amounts of phosphates from car wash detergents can wash into storm drains, streams and the ocean causing algal blooms (overgrowth of aquatic plants that smother other aquatic life). These blooms block sunlight needed by underwater plants that provide habitat, and the algae's decay robs the water of dissolved oxygen needed by aquatic life.

### TAKE ACTION:

- One of the best practices is to use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles the wastewater. Some use only 3 gallons of fresh water to rinse each car.
- Use only enough of a cleaning product to get the job done; use low phosphate or phosphate-free detergents if possible.
- If you wash your car on a City street, use plain water or wash your car on a grassy area so the detergent doesn't go directly into the storm drain.
- Use a spray gun with flow restriction or a bucket and sponge to minimize runoff and save water. The average homeowner who uses up to 150 gallons of water with the hose running. Fast wet down and rinsing sections at a time reduces use to 50 gallons.
- Dispose leftover soapy water in the toilet or sink.

### REPORT ACTIVITIES:

City's Environmental Concern Line at **768-3300** or visit  
[www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com)

Reference: Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, City and County of Honolulu Storm Water Quality Branch, Honolulu Board of Water Supply, McKinley Car Wash, <http://epa.gov/hps/toolbox/>

