

Our Water. Our Future.



Ours to Protect

Practice good car care

Did you know there are over four million vehicles in Southeast Michigan?

Practicing good car care helps protect our lakes and rivers.

How? Storm drains and roadside ditches lead to our lakes and rivers. So, if motor fluids or dirty water from washing our cars are washed or dumped into the storm drain, it pollutes our local waterways.

What can you do? Follow the simple tips on the back of this card for a clean, well-running vehicle that also protects our lakes and rivers.

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Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

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Make a date. Car wash facilities treat their dirty water before discharging it to our lakes and rivers. 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. Or, 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.

Maintain it. Keep your vehicle properly tuned. Use the owner's manual to guide decisions about how often it is necessary to change fluids such as oil and antifreeze.

Take advantage of business expertise. Consider taking your vehicle to the shop to have the oil and other fluids changed. These businesses have the ability to recycle the used materials and clean up accidental spills.

Recycle. If you choose to change your oil and other fluids yourself, label the waste containers. Then, take them to your community's household hazardous waste collection day or to a business that accepts used oil. Never dump used oil, antifreeze, or other fluids on the ground or down the storm drain.

Soak it up. Use kitty litter promptly to absorb small amounts of spilled vehicle fluids. Then sweep it into a bag and throw it in the trash.

Do it under cover. Perform vehicle maintenance in a well-ventilated, but covered location (e.g., garage). This minimizes rainfall from washing those inevitable spills.