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Pacifica Beach Coalition: One Simple Thing You Can Do

By *Pacifica Tribune*

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Our little everyday habits add up to great impacts on the environment. Be a part of the solution, not the problem.

CAR WASH

Car wash water contains many harmful substances, including soap, detergents, residue from exhaust fumes, gasoline, heavy metals from rust, and motor oils. These substances flow to storm drains, into creeks, and right to the beach, where they can harm water quality and wildlife. Phosphates from soap cause excess algae to grow, and decaying algae uses up oxygen that aquatic animals need.

One easy solution is to use a commercial car wash. They usually reuse the same water several times, and then send it to a treatment plant.

If you want to wash your own car, use a phosphate-free, environmentally friendly cleaner. (I have used an eco-friendly dish washing soap. A little goes a long way anyway. But there are phosphate free car soaps available as well.) And to help filter all the other nasty chemicals before they enter waterways, try to wash your car on an area that absorbs water, such as gravel or grass, rather than on the pavement.

Thanks for doing your part.

Misha Flores is a member of the Pacifica Beach Coalition and provides regular tips to Tribune readers on ways they can help protect the environment.

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