



**Wash your vehicle on unsealed ground to prevent discharges to the stormwater system.**

## THE LAW

**You can be fined up to \$1,000 for breaches of the Resource Management Act.**

It is illegal for any substance to enter water either directly, through the stormwater system or via the contamination of land.

## REMEMBER

- Even small quantities of seemingly harmless materials can cause damage to the environment.
- Outside drains discharge straight into the local stream or to the sea.
- If you cannot divert or wash your vehicles or equipment to unsealed ground, take them to a commercial wash facility.

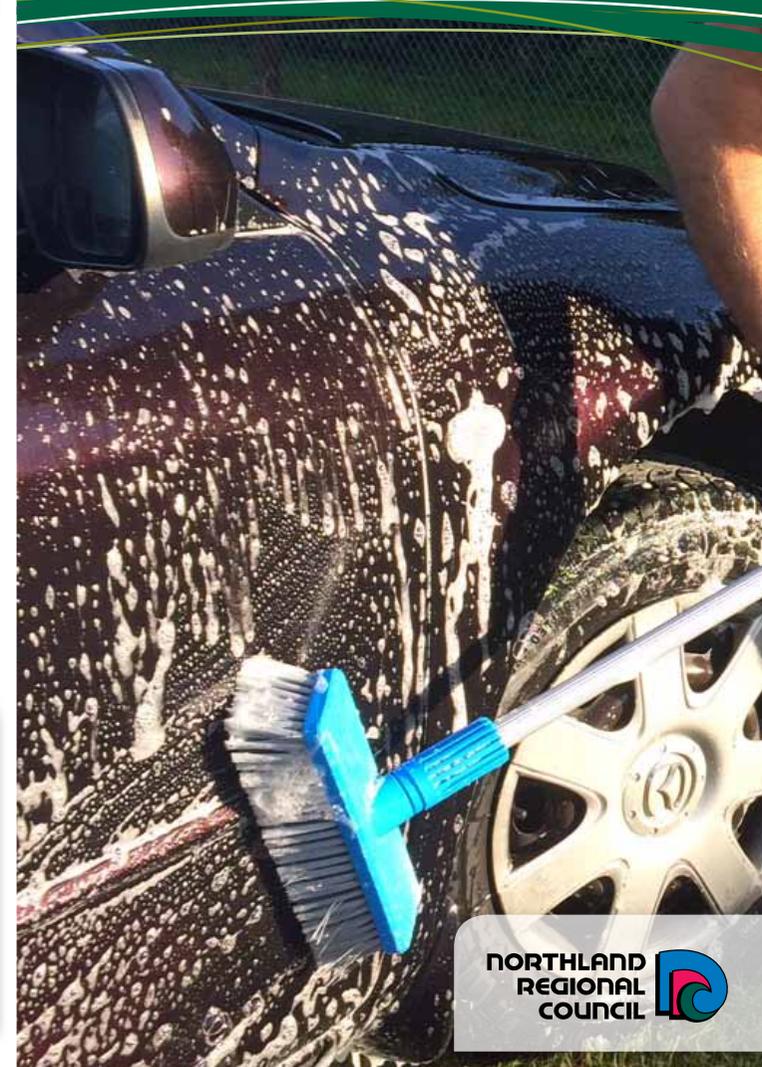
**All outside drains are for rainwater only and drain straight into the local stream or the sea!**

For any illegal discharges, phone our  
24/7 Environmental Hotline  
**0800 504 639**

To speak to one of our Environmental  
Monitoring Officers, phone 0800 002 004

## PREVENTING POLLUTION OF OUR WATERWAYS

# Vehicle and equipment washing



## WASH WATER DAMAGES THE ENVIRONMENT

Wash water from vehicle and equipment washing can contain a variety of pollutants including detergents, dirt, oil, concrete, fuel residues, metals, paint and more.

The cumulative effect from these pollutants causes serious damage to our environment including:

- Contamination of water ways
- Poisoning of aquatic wildlife and plants
- Smothering of aquatic habitat
- Degrading the aquatic environment due to lack of oxygen and sunlight
- Build up of toxins in animals' bodies, potentially causing harm to humans when caught and eaten.



**When washing vehicles and equipment, it is important to prevent the discharge of any contaminants into the stormwater system or natural water.**

## GETTING IT RIGHT - WASHING YOUR VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT

There are ways to prevent discharges from entering the stormwater system when washing vehicles or equipment.

**Here are several ideas:**

### Divert your wash water

- Wash vehicles or equipment on unsealed ground such as gravel or grass
- Use sandbags to divert runoff to unsealed ground.

### Minimise the amount of wash water created

- Use a high pressure, low volume system
- Conserve water when washing by using a trigger hose or bucket
- Recycle as much wash water as possible.

### Note:

#### Biodegradable detergents still pollute the environment.

When using these:

- Treat them like any other potentially harmful chemical
- Do not apply or wash them off without containment in place
- Make sure they do not enter the stormwater system.

## QUICK TIPS

Wash your vehicle on unsealed ground to prevent discharges to the stormwater system

*or*

Take your vehicle to a commercial car wash facility to prevent unlawful discharges.

## WASHING EARTH-MOVING EQUIPMENT

Sediment is a major pollutant in the Northland Region. If it enters the stormwater system it will end up in our streams, estuaries and the sea where it can cause serious damage to the environment and natural habitat.

### What can you do?

- Wash equipment on site if a designated wash down area is provided
- Wash onto gravel or unsealed ground
- Invest in a permanent wash bay if washing occurs on a regular basis.

## COMMUNITY CAR WASHES

A large quantity of vehicle wash water is created at fundraising car washes. It is essential that this wash water does not enter the stormwater system.

It is important to plan ahead. Before washing begins, you can:

- Cover and block any stormwater drains
- Divert washwater to unsealed ground
- Block the catchpit outflow and remove excess water with a wet-vacuum.

If you cannot find a suitable location, check with a local self serve car wash business and ask to use one of their stalls to conduct the car wash fundraiser.

