

Going to the Car Wash

By Jacquelyn Buck

Allen County Partnership for Water Quality is encouraging residents to wash their cars at the car wash or in a grassy area! When we hand wash cars on a paved surface, all the detergents, chemicals, and dirt coming off the car head straight to local waterways. Impervious surfaces such as blacktop, concrete, or cement do not allow water through them, but instead, usher it to the nearest ditch or storm drain. Therefore, moving where one washes a car, we can help improve water quality!

Washing cars on grass instead of using an impervious surface allows the grass to help filter out contaminants before they make their way to a stream! Our lawns can help to slow down detergents, dirt, and chemicals that come off cars, many times repurposing them. When we wash our cars on the grass, we can eliminate a scheduled watering for the lawn for that week.

Easier yet, head to a car wash! When these facilities were built, they were done so with water quality in mind. [Many car washing facilities will recycle the water before sending it to wastewater facilities](#) where water is treated before being released into the rivers!

Take that extra step and refrain from washing cars on driveways to help improve water quality in our rivers. This simple step can leave both your car and our rivers cleaner!