



Car Wash and Auto Detailing Facilities Fact Sheet

Due to the increasing number of auto detailing and smaller car wash businesses emerging in Hillsborough County, the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County (EPC) has received numerous inquiries on the waste water management practices and permitting requirements for these facilities. This informational fact sheet is prepared to help the public and the business owners understand the regulatory requirements for car wash and other similar facilities. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) has determined that certain vehicle washing activities result in insignificant environmental impacts and are therefore not required to apply for an industrial waste permit. These activities call for either implementing certain Best Management Practices (BMPs), a general car wash permit or an industrial wastewater permit, pursuant to Chapter 62-660, Florida Administrative Code. Contact EPC at (813) 627-2600 or the FDEP Southwest District office at (813) 470-5700 for further guidance related to industrial wastewater permits.

Recommended Best Management Practices:

- Maximum amount of wastewater to be generated: 4000 gal/ week (estimation factors: 10-15 gal/ car with pressure washer; 25 gal/ car with nozzle on hose).
- No engine/ motor cleaning; only exterior washing of passenger vehicles is allowed.
- Use of solvents or degreasing agents is prohibited; used biodegradable detergents and dry wax.
- No discharge of wastewater to surface waters. (Example: storm drains, pond, etc.)
- No direct discharge of wastewater to groundwater. (Example: through wells sink holes)
- Maintain adequate setbacks: 100 ft. from public wells, 75 ft. from private wells.

Additional Recommended Best Management Practices:

- High pressure nozzles should be used to minimize quantity of wastewater generated.
- Provide overhangs or other covering structures to preclude rainwater intrusion.
- Provide curbing around wash area to contain car wash wastewater for evaporation
- Maintain as much distance as possible from the wash area to surface water and groundwater access. (Example: storm drain, ponds, drinking wells, etc.)
- Employ BMPs in water conservation and wastewater collection/ disposal activities
- Do not allow wastewater to leave the property via any means (e.g., no run-off, no stormdrains)
- Prevent ponding which may create a nuisance condition for neighbors.

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