

What is storm water runoff?

Storm water runoff refers to the flow of water generated from rainfall and melting snow into streams.

A change from the forested to the developed landscape has meant the loss of many trees, and replacement with housing developments, roads, and parking lots. This means a loss in the water recharging into our precious underground aquifers, and a great increase in the amount of runoff and erosion.

Because precipitation now often falls on non-absorbent surfaces--rooftops and asphalt-- it has nowhere to go but into the nearest stream. Without adequate open spaces and streamside forests, the urban and suburban areas quite literally "flood" the creek.

Storm water runoff is the largest source of pollutants to our streams and drinking water supplies.



Learn More...

Visit the CRC Watersheds Association website:
www.crcwatersheds.org

Let us know how you did!

Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association (CRC) and its municipal stormwater partners would like to know how you managed your "Green" Car Wash.

Please send us a photo for our Facebook page (to kadamskeller@verizon.net) or contact us directly at crc@nni.com or 610-892-8731



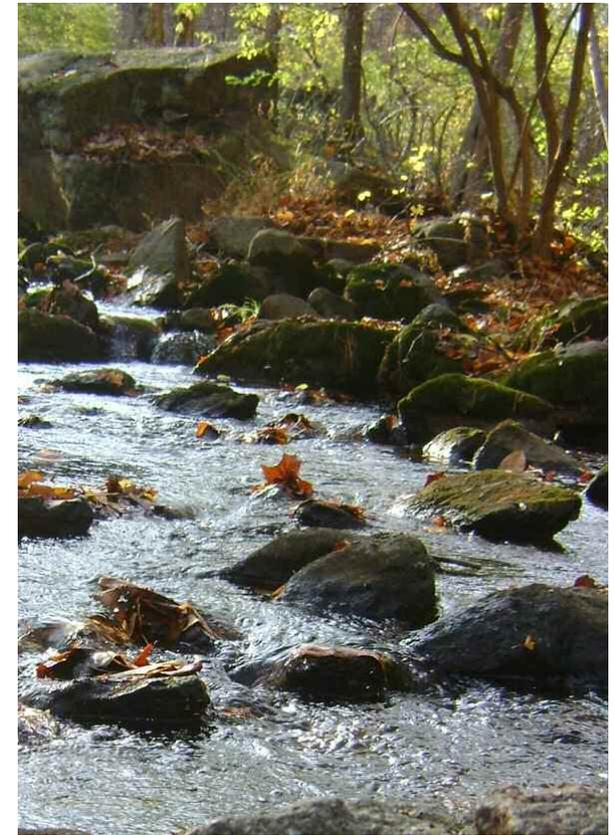
Consider volunteering your group to help at an upcoming CRC Streams Cleanup !

MS42012

Car Washes and Your Stream:

Can you be both

clean and green?



Guidelines for Residents and Schools

Chester Ridley Crum Watersheds Association
Municipal Stormwater Partnerships

How Car Washes Can Degrade Our Streams

Each year, many car wash fundraisers are held outdoors in our school district. This popular activity, if not carefully located and controlled, pollutes our streams and can harm fish and other wildlife.

The majority of these car washes are held on paved surfaces such as parking lots, where the dirty, soapy water runs into streets where it can empty into stormdrains.

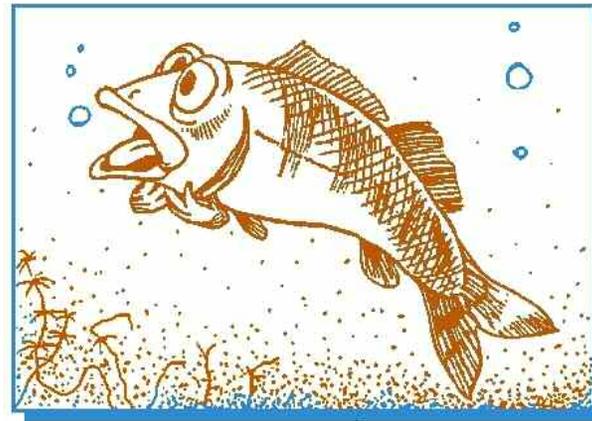
Stormdrains convey the polluted water directly to our local streams untreated.



Photo taken on a Crum Creek tributary in winter showing showing detergent discharge from stormwater outfall and algae in the stream.

Individual Actions Combine to have Large Impacts

A conventional outdoor car wash contributes 80 to 140 gallons of soapy, oily, and dirty water for each car washed. The detergents in the runoff contain surfactants harmful to fish and amphibians, and tap water from running hoses contains sufficient chlorine to kill fish.



The cumulative impact of these individual actions multiplied across the watershed and throughout the season degrades the quality of our streams, and causes particular harm to the most sensitive of our cold water fish and amphibian species.

How to Hold a More Environmentally Friendly Car Wash



- 1 If possible, pair up with a commercial car wash for your cause. They use less water, reuse the water and ultimately discharge to stormdrains.
- 2 Choose a car wash site and washing station location where the runoff flows naturally to a grassy area. Block nearby stormdrains with a section of heavy rubber foam matting, hay bales, small sandbags, or other creative solutions.
- 3 Pick up all trash and sweep the area in the beginning so the grit will not be carried away with the water.
- 4 Use buckets for wash water with minimal biodegradable soap, if any, and rinse water, to wash and rinse the cars without the use of running water.
- 5 Use a hose that is high pressure/low volume with a trigger nozzle to fill the buckets. Do not allow the hose to run freely on the pavement. Dump buckets of dirty wash water into sinks.