

Planetary Wellbeing

Cut Pollution & Toxicity

- Cleaning & Laundry
- **Green Carwash**
- Low-Toxin Manufacturing
- Natural Garden & Lawn Care
- Organic & Sustainable Agriculture
- Pest Control
- Plant-Based Eating
- Zero Emissions
- Zero Toxin Parenting

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Save Energy & Climate

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Have a Non-Toxic Home Car Wash

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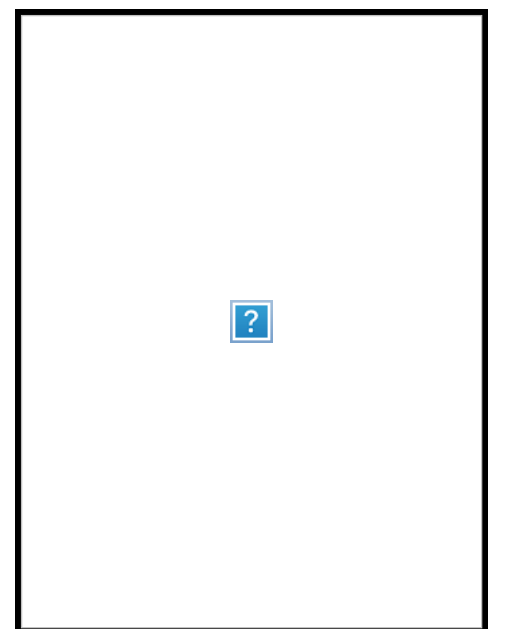
Washing your vehicle at home may mean you're flushing environmental toxins down the drain where they harm fish and other aquatic life. Home-washing of vehicles is still very popular in many communities, with Americans choosing the DIY method 38% of the time, but the products conventionally used are far from green.^[1] Try an eco-friendly car wash technique to lessen the eco-impact of your wash-up routine.

Quick Guide: Eco-Friendly Car Wash Techniques

- **Toxic ingredients in car wash detergents:** These products can contain chlorinated hydrocarbons, hydrochloric acid, naphthalene, sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, trichloroethylene, methylene chloride, and more, most of which are considered hazardous and very bad for human and environmental health.^[1]
- **Phosphate environmental nightmares:** Most detergents used to clean vehicles (and dishes and laundry) contain phosphates, a class of chemicals that spur algae growth, which ultimately leads to low-oxygen water in lakes, rivers, and oceans. Crustaceans, shellfish, and other aquatic life die without oxygen in their ecosystems.
- **Automobile fluids:** Oil, antifreeze, transmission fluid – all of these chemicals contain components that are toxic to humans, animals, and aquatic life. When you wash them off your vehicle into the stormwater system, you send them into ecosystems where they can do a lot of damage.

Take Action! Have a Green Car Wash at Home

1. **Use non-toxic, biodegradable soap:** Look for eco-friendly car wash soaps free of phosphates, fragrances, chlorine, and petroleum-based ingredients. Try your own mix (see recipe below) or look for store-bought eco car wash products like [Simple Green](#), [ECOS](#), or [Ecover](#).
2. **Keep motor fluids from leaking:** Try to stop leaks of oil, antifreeze, or transmission fluid and other chemicals before you wash to avoid poisoning your local waterways.
3. **Stay away from acid cleaners:** These cleaners are often used for wheel wells and engine degreasing, but are very bad for marine environments.
4. **Use proper water disposal methods:** Don't just dump your wash water in the storm drain or your driveway. Take your bucket of water into the house and dispose of it in a work sink or the toilet. This will ensure the water is properly treated (in case it contains auto contaminants) rather than poisoning rivers and lakes.



Recipe for Homemade Car Wash Soap

Make your own non-toxic eco car wash soap to safely wash your vehicle outside using the following simple ingredients:

- Pure castile soap: Use after a quick water rinse to sponge off dirt and bugs.
- Washing soda and salt: Mix with some water to make a paste and use to clean tough grime.
- 50/50 white vinegar and water mixture: Use for polishing vinyl, plastic, leather, chrome, wood, and windows.

Dig Deeper: Car Wash Toxins

- Learn more about [hypoxia](#) (low-oxygen water) and [eutrophication](#) – aquatic conditions that result from phosphate pollution.
- Find out what the US EPA thinks about [automobile pollutants](#).

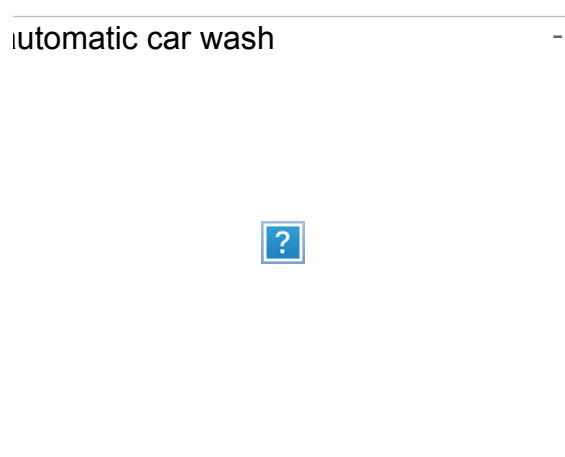
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References

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