



## City of Valdosta Engineering Department *Stormwater Division*

### COMMERCIAL CAR WASHES

Very few people realize the impact that washing their vehicles can have on our environment. For example, when a vehicle is washed in a driveway, pollutants such as oil, grease, and detergents can enter a storm drain and then be discharged into a nearby stream or pond untreated. This can cause harm to fish and other aquatic life. One way that you can help protect our environment is to use a commercial car wash.

#### COMMERCIAL CAR WASHES

Commercial car wash facilities are required by federal law to drain their wastewater into the sanitary sewer system. The purpose of this is to treat the wastewater by removing pollutants at a wastewater treatment plant before it is discharged back into our streams. There are three types of commercial car washes:

##### (1) Conveyor Car Washes



##### (2) In-Bay Automatic Car Washes



##### (3) Self-Serve Car Washes



#### BENEFITS

Commercial car washes not only collect the polluted wastewater and send it to the wastewater treatment plant to be cleaned, but they also help conserve water. Water is conserved by using computer controlled systems, special pressure nozzles that mix air with water to increase pressure while decreasing water volume, and/or by recycling water.

In most cases, a commercial car wash uses 60% less water throughout the entire washing process than just the rinsing step of an at home car wash. Commercial car washes that recycle water are able to reduce their water consumption by an additional 10-80% when compared to a standard car wash.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
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