



MOBILE VEHICLE WASHER PROGRAM

This program applies to the washing of vehicles and equipment by companies that wash at the customer's place of business.

Mobile vehicle washers doing business in Tacoma must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Mobile washers must possess a current [City of Tacoma Business License](#) and [Mobile Garage License](#). Annual renewal of these licenses is required. [Right-of-Way Bonds](#) must also be renewed annually.
- 2) Mobile washers may wash only the exteriors of the vehicles. Engine washing, cleaning the undercarriage or fifth wheel, or washing portable equipment is strictly prohibited unless prior approval is received from Environmental Services (Control Authority). Additional pretreatment may be required.
- 3) Mobile washers using soap or cleaning agents must:
 - a. Provide adequate means to prevent contaminated wash water from entering the storm drainage system or discharging onto unpaved ground;
 - b. Rinse the work area with clean water after washing is completed and collect the rinse water;
 - c. Discharge all wash and rinse water to the sanitary sewer or collect and haul the wastewater to an approved location for discharge to the sanitary sewer;
 - d. Submit the Material Safety Data Sheets for all chemicals used, and;
 - e. Obtain Control Authority approval before any chemicals are used or changed.
- 4) Only wastewater generated within the City of Tacoma may be discharged into Tacoma's sanitary sewer system.
- 5) All discharges to the City of Tacoma sewer system must meet Tacoma Municipal Code, Chapter 12.08C discharge limitations for pH. The mobile washer is expected to:
 - a. Provide some means of holding and mixing the wash water generated;
 - b. Provide an accepted means of testing the pH of the mixed wash water;
 - c. Provide a means of adjusting the pH, if necessary, to within City of Tacoma limits (pH 5.0—11.0);
 - d. Record on a log sheet the date, time, and final pH of the wash water to be discharged;
 - e. Discharge the wastewater to the sanitary sewer at the wash site; or

- f. Capture all of the water and haul all of it to an approved location for discharge to the sanitary sewer.

6) Alternative discharge locations will require prior approval by the Control Authority. Written approval by the receiving business/property owner or a Right of Way Bond will be required. Disposal at locations outside the City of Tacoma will require written verification or approval from the authority having jurisdiction.

7) Mobile washers must abide by all conditions in their Letter of Authorization. {The washer must only wash vehicles and equipment using approved chemicals, and collect, treat, and dispose of the wastewater in the same way at all wash locations.}

8) By **December 15th** of each year, a signed Certification Statement certifying the mobile washer is in compliance with the terms of this program and their Letter of Authorization, copies of the current business and mobile garage licenses, copies of the SDS sheets for the wash chemicals used, and the log recording the final pH of the wash water discharged must be submitted to the Control Authority.

9) Upon initial authorization to operate the mobile washer must provide a complete customer name and address list. An updated list must be submitted to the Control Authority by **December 15th** of each year.

10) The Letter of Authorization is valid for one calendar year. **Failure to comply with the requirements of this program will result in an appropriate enforcement action which may include fines, penalties, and the revocation of your Letter of Authorization.**

11) Letters of Authorization are issued to a specific user for a specific operation and may not be assigned. If a business is sold, the Letter of Authorization will not transfer to the new owner.

Note: If only **cold water** is used to rinse the exteriors of new and used vehicles at dealerships, then discharge to the storm drain is allowed, with certain conditions, as provided by [Department of Ecology Best Management Practices Manual WQ-R-95-56.](#)

Disclaimer: Fulfilling the requirements of the mobile washing program does not relieve the washer from the obligation to comply with all pertinent federal, state, and local requirements.

Questions? Please contact Environmental Services at (253) 502-2200, Monday through Friday, 6:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

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