



Automotive Repairs and Maintenance

Automotive repairs and other projects in residential areas are not only unsightly but can affect the water quality of our local creeks and South San Francisco Bay. Also, when waste from these activities is not properly handled it can make its way to the City's storm drain system. Rain and water runoff washes vehicle pollutants such as automotive oils, copper from brake pad linings and fluids from radiator flushing off roads and streets into storm drains. These pollutants flow from the storm drain system into our creeks and bay, harming fish and other aquatic life.

What can you do to help? Here are some handy tips to follow:

If you change your own oil, recycle the waste oil at the curb. For recycling details, Sunnyvale residents can check for information regarding curbside recycling of automotive oil on the SMaRT Station web page at recycling.insunnyvale.com, or take it to a Household Hazardous Waste collection event.

- Never pour oil or other automobile fluids into a storm drain or onto the ground.
- Regularly maintain your car to avoid leaks of auto fluids. Promptly clean up spills and leaks on paved surfaces using sawdust, kitty litter or other absorbent materials (not your hose). Properly dispose of the used absorbent in the trash.
- Wash your car on an unpaved area or better yet, take it to a commercial car wash.

Washing your car or rinsing the engine on a paved surface will send pollutants from your automobile into the storm drain system.

- DO use a commercial car wash
- DO wash your car on a lawn, gravel driveway or area where soapy water will not run into a street or storm drain.
- DO use soap sparingly if you must wash your vehicle at home – even biodegradable soap is toxic to wildlife.
- DO pour your bucket of soapy water down the sink when you have finished.
- DO use paper towels to wipe brake dust off of wheels before washing.
- DO NOT clean wheels, brakes or brake pads where brake pad dust, cleaners or rinse water can flow to a street or storm drain.

Proper use and disposal of auto fluids is an easy way to prevent stormwater pollution and protect our creeks and Bay.

- DO drain fluid into a drain pan. Use a funnel to pour fluid into a plastic container.
- DO recycle used oil.
- DO recycle your old oil filter. Poke holes in it and let it drain into your oil pan for several hours first.
- DO dispose of radiator fluid properly. Don't flush your radiator where fluids can flow into a street, gutter or storm drain.
- DO NOT drain or pour any auto fluid onto the street or into a storm drain.
- DO NOT mix coolant with other auto fluids. They are not recyclable when mixed.