

# OMF W.I.S.E ~ First Friday Fun Facts

## Sustainable Car Care

So, you're ready to do some spring cleaning...

Having a car devoid of dirt and salt is a way to protect your investment, but if you do an at-home car wash, you may be doing more harm to the environment than you think. Water and contaminants from your vehicle flow freely down the driveway into the storm drain and into rivers, lakes and streams without first being treated.



When washing cars at home, remember these tips provided by the Maryland Department of the Environment:

- Park on gravel or grass so soapy water soaks into the ground, becomes filtered and recharges groundwater.
- Use soap that does not say “harmful, danger or poison.” Try eco-friendly versions or make your own. For more information on green cleaners go to **Metro: Green Cleaners**
- Turn off the hose when you're not using the water. During a 15-minute car wash, you could use 150 gallons of water if there isn't an automatic shut-off nozzle.

If you're out doing errands already, you may want to stop by a commercial car wash, where dirty water is carried to a treatment plant. Newer facilities recycle 10-80 percent of their wastewater for an additional environmental benefit. To find an eco-friendly car wash near you, check the Chinook Book coupon book or visit the **EcoMetro website**.



This information is excerpted from *8 ways to Green your Spring*, posted on the **Earth911** website.

This factsheet is brought to you by the OMF “W.I.S.E Guys & Gals”:  
Workplace Innovators for a Sustainable Earth, OMF’s Sustainability Team.  
Watch for new tips every first Friday of the month!