

ATTENTION
Owners/Operators of Outdoor Washing Businesses

As you may or may not be aware, any water that falls on roads, parking lots, driveways, etc. is channeled to the nearest storm drain, which then carries the water to the nearest creek or stream. Several streams within Athens-Clarke County have been identified by the Environmental Protection Agency as impaired waters, meaning the water quality has been polluted and is no longer suitable for some uses. Other streams are at risk or are also of concern for water quality contaminants.

Pressure washing and mobile car washing are allowed in Athens-Clarke County, provided that proper containment measures are taken to prevent washwater from entering storm drains. There are a number of county ordinances that relate to your business, outlining specific provisions that must be followed in order to lawfully operate an outdoor washing business. These provisions include:

- No washing, greasing, or repairing vehicles in the street (**Sec. 3-3-12**)
- Potable water is not allowed to flow into the public rights-of-way (**Sec. 5-3-123(2)**)
- When washing impermeable surfaces such as driveways, parking lots, or sidewalks, a positive action quick release shut off valve or nozzle must be used. (**Sec. 5-3-123(4)**)
- Washing of impermeable surfaces may be done no more than twice a year, unless required for public health and safety (**Sec. 5-3-123(4)**)
- Washwater may not be discharged to the separate storm sewer system (**Sec. 5-4-22**)
- Waste liquid, including washwater from car washes, may not be drained to any part of the street without special permission from the Director of Public Works (**Sec. 7-3-3**)
- Parking lots are not to be used for car washing, as it is a use other than that which they were intended for. (**Sec. 9-30-11**)
- If car-washing activities take place within a parking lot, they are changing the use of the parking lot necessitating additional facilities including plumbing requirements that provide pre-treatment of the wastewater from the car-washing and other pressure washing activities (**Section 1003.1 of the 2006 International Plumbing Code**)
- The full code of ordinances can be found at <http://www.athensclarkecounty.com/code>

VIOLATING ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES IS AN OFFENSE PUNISHABLE BY FINES UP TO \$1000 FOR EACH VIOLATION AND/OR A JAIL TERM OF UP TO 6 MONTHS.

In order for you to better meet the requirements of the above ordinances and better protect our streams and rivers, Athens-Clarke County requires that all outdoor washing businesses capture their washwater to be

discharged to the sanitary sewer system at the North Oconee or Middle Oconee Wastewater Treatment Plants. In order to receive approval for a business license, an outdoor washing business must:

1. Provide documentation of the washwater capture and discharge method to be employed including proof of purchase or some other evidence of capture and discharge capabilities. See attachment for examples of methods that may be used.
2. Obtain approval from the following departments by having them complete the attached form:
 - a. Transportation and Public Works (will approve washwater capture plan)
 - b. Planning (will approve home occupation permit)

We at Athens-Clarke County appreciate your cooperation as we are committed to reducing further pollution of our waterways as the first step toward cleaner water resources for the entire community.

Your signature below acknowledges receipt of a copy of this notice and an understanding of the consequences of violating Athens-Clarke County ordinances in your car and/or pressure washing or other outdoor washing business.

Print Name and Title (Owner, Co-owner, etc.)

Business Name

Street Address, City, State, Zip

Phone (Home)

(Cell)

Email (ex: johndoe@carwash.com)

Signature

Date

Outdoor Washing Business Approval Form

Applicant Name

Date

Business Name

1. The applicant has provided sufficient documentation to provide for the capture of **all** wastewater generated by their business' activities in accordance with the policies of the Transportation and Public Works Department's Stormwater Division.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

2. The applicant has completed the appropriate forms and applications for their business in accordance with the policies of the Planning Department.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Example Car Wash Containment Systems

Hydropad Portable Wash Pad (Request a quote for cost)

A wash fluid containment system with an elevated, fluid-impervious surface. The surface is configured to allow fluid to flow off of the surface into a collection trough. Used fluid can then be collected and recycled or disposed of.

<http://www.hydroblaster.com/HydropadPortableWashRack.htm>



Latimat Wash Pad System (Cost = approximately \$1,200)

Latimat wash pad systems allow users to wash planes, trains, automobiles, trucks, trailer fleets, buildings and machinery while containing potentially hazardous materials. During wash cycles, harmful pollutants and chemicals are removed from transport vehicles, buildings and machinery. The Latimat® wash pad system holds these pollutants until they can be removed and purified.

<http://www.chappellsupply.com/latimat.htm>



Example Pressure Washing Runoff Containment System

Vacu-Boom (Cost = approximately \$3,000)

The *Vacu-Boom* is a hollow, flexible tube five inches in diameter that is placed directly on a hard surface to form a downslope side dam or to completely encircle the wash or containment area. <http://www.vacuboom.com/>



Example of Washwater Containment in Action



During a power washing project at The Standard, a wastewater containment system similar to the Vacu-Boom was used to capture all runoff effectively. The system created a seal around the work area, ensuring that no washwater entered storm drains or surrounding areas.



Using the Sirocco Vacuum system with a generator, the operator vacuums up washwater as it is generated during cleaning, preventing runoff from entering storm drains. The powerful vacuum recovers the water and debris, containing it in a secure holding tank for proper disposal. By incorporating an additional filtration system, such as the Big Blue Filter Bank, contaminants like debris and oils can be removed from the water before it is contained. This proactive approach helps avoid costly illicit discharge fines by ensuring that contaminated water is safely filtered, contained, and does not pollute local waterways.

Disclaimer:

Athens-Clarke County does not and cannot endorse these products, nor have we verified any of the claims made by these companies and reproduced as examples above. Costs may also vary. It is the responsibility of an operator to research the right treatment option for the type of washwater that the operator is likely to generate.