

CAR CARE

Your car and how well you maintain it have a significant impact on the lakes and streams near you. Cars carry many different hazardous fluids and require natural resources to run. How efficiently or inefficiently our cars use these resources and carry these fluids has a direct impact on our environment - such as our water and air. When a vehicle is poorly maintained, and the maintenance activities are carelessly conducted, chemicals that become pollutants in our streams - may be spilled or may drip onto the pavement and eventually are carried into our streams and lakes when it rains, or when snow melts.

A well-maintained vehicle uses less gasoline and runs more efficiently without dripping chemicals onto the pavement or spewing excess exhaust into the air. Follow these simple guidelines to reduce the impact of your car on our streams, lakes and rivers - and save yourself some money too!

CAR FLUIDS

Vehicle fluids include any fluid normally used in a vehicle such as:

- Brake Fluid
- Engine Oil
- Power Steering Fluid
- Radiator Fluid
- Transmission Fluid

When these leak or drip out of the car onto the pavement or are improperly disposed, they eventually run off with rain into storm drains, lakes, and streams. Here, they can contaminate water supplies and kill fish and other aquatic life, even in small quantities.

CHECK FOR LEAKS

Have your fluids checked in your car once every three months for leaks. If you change your own oil, be sure to dispose of the used motor oil at an oil recycling center and not down the storm drains. Many facilities that sell and change oil will accept your used oil, including quick lubes, Wal-Mart, and Murray's Auto Center. Call local businesses in your area to find the most convenient place for you.

CLEAN UP SPILLS

It is always a good idea to use an oil pan when working on your vehicle to prevent accidental spills. If you do spill, pour kitty litter, sawdust, or cornmeal to absorb the spilled materials. Let this dry for a few hours and then sweep up the absorbents. If the spill is less than one gallon, place the absorption grains in a heavy-duty garbage bag and dispose with your trash. Otherwise, take the material to your local household hazardous waste drop-off site or event.