



Washing Vehicles

Vehicles must only be washed in accordance with water restrictions. The *Victorian Uniform Drought Water Restriction Guidelines*, produced by the Victorian Water Industry Association, details water restrictions in Victoria. These guidelines came into effect in 2005 and explain how businesses can use water to wash cars and vehicles in the four stages of water restrictions (see Water Restrictions Guideline). Local water authorities enforce these Water Restriction Guidelines, and alter them depending on Victoria's water conditions.

If your business does wash vehicles as a part of its operations you must be aware of the following:

- You are not permitted to allow soapy water to enter stormwater drains. Even biodegradable soaps must not be allowed to enter stormwater.
- Visible entrances to the stormwater system include: side entry pits, kerbs, gutters and stormwater drainpipes. They all lead directly into waterways and eventually into the sea.
- You may only discharge wastewater into the sewer if you have a *Trade Waste Agreement* or prior approval from your local water authority. Otherwise you will need an EPA approved transporter to pick this up.
- If your premises are not connected to the sewerage system, then wastewater should be directed to a septic tank. You need a permit for any septic tank with a volume that is less than 5000 litres, and a licence for tanks over 5000 litres.
- You must wash vehicles in a designated wash bay that is roofed, bunded and drains to the sewer via a silt trap or a triple interceptor.

Ways to Reduce Your Water Consumption

- If possible, subcontract vehicle washing to an existing car wash facility.
- Attach trigger action nozzles to your hoses to reduce water usage.
- Use a high pressure low volume wash machine in compliance with car washing restrictions.
- Do not wash vehicles in the street or driveway where water runs to stormwater.
- Recycle wastewater by using equipment that allows you to remove contaminants from water.
- Collect and use rainwater for vehicle washing to avoid water restrictions. Your business could do this by installing rain water tanks.

Please Note

For further details and information regarding vehicle washing and water restrictions contact your local water authority.

Waster Restrictions in Victoria

Stage 1, 2, 3 & 4 water restrictions will be announced in local media and will change depending on local water storage conditions. As noted above, detailed water restriction guidelines are published by the Victorian Water Industry Association and are enforced by local authorities. As local water restrictions and penalties may be more severe than the *Victorian Uniform Drought Water Restriction Guidelines*, you must contact your local water authority to determine local requirements. Your **local water authority** will also provide specific information about conserving water in your area.

Water restrictions must be followed at all times. If you are served with a warning notice and still breach the restrictions, you may have your water supply restricted and face significant fines or jail.

Exemptions

Exemptions from water restrictions, to cover certain circumstances, can be applied for. Businesses that must wash vehicles to keep people in employment should apply for a Commercial Car Wash approval, or obtain a permit from their local water authority.

Further Information



Our Water Our Future

Phone: 136 186

www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/

Water Authorities (Victoria Online)

www.vic.gov.au/business-industry/utilities-energy/water-authorities.html

© VACC Green Stamp Plus
Issue date: November 2010

Note: This Good Practice Guideline is not a complete statement of law relevant to this topic. Further legal advice must be sought if complete information is required.