

Stormwater University

a program of RE Sources for Sustainable Communities

in partnership with the WA State Department of Ecology & the City of Bellingham



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 10, 2013 - Whatcom, Skagit Counties, WA

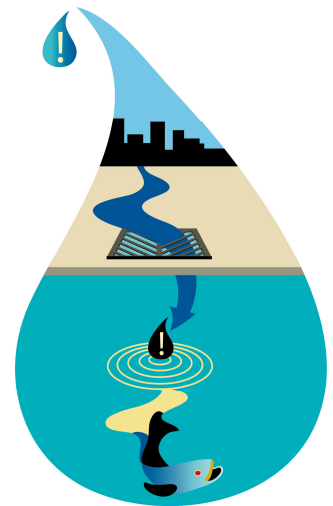
RE Sources Educates Vehicle Washing and Detailing Businesses to Prevent Water Pollution

Stormwater University Continuing Education Workshop Series

Whatcom, Skagit Counties, WA – Vehicle washing and detailing businesses are invited to join RE Sources for Sustainable Communities, in coordination with local governments, at workshops from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Tuesday, January 29 in Bellingham and Thursday, January 31 in Burlington, to learn how to prevent water pollution. Both workshops cover the same information.

- Tuesday, January 29 – Wilson Motors Conference Room, 1100 Iowa Street, Bellingham.
- Thursday, January 31, Puget Sound Energy Skagit Service Center Conference Room, 1660 Park Lane, Burlington.

Each session begins with a presentation at 10 a.m. and is followed by an outdoor demonstration at noon. Attendees are asked to pre-register with Lee First: leef@re-sources.org or (360) 733 - 8307. Refreshments are provided for registered attendees.



Business that wash and/or detail vehicles have the potential to discharge polluted stormwater which often contains soaps, cleaners, oil, antifreeze, grease, and metals. Participants will learn why stormwater pollution is a problem, the difference between stormwater and wastewater, easy steps to prevent pollution, and how to report spills. Workshops will also include an outdoor demonstration of best management practices in action at a nearby site.

The workshops are part of an innovative education and outreach program called Stormwater University, designed to help businesses and citizens understand best management practices for preventing and mitigating pollution. Currently, the program is geared toward businesses with activities that typically generate higher levels of pollution, such as mobile cleaning, equipment rental, boat repair, and vehicle washing and detailing. Stormwater University has crafted a series of fact sheets, posters, and free workshops to help business owners by providing tips for practices that protect water quality, and in the process, save money. Materials can be found on both RE Sources' and City of Bellingham websites, <http://www.re-sources.org> or cob.org, search "Stormwater University".

"The shores, wetlands and waters of Puget Sound belong to all of us," said Lee First, Pollution Prevention Specialist for RE Sources and Stormwater University Coordinator. "Protecting our environment demands proper stewardship. When you see harm being done to Puget Sound, remember this is where you live – take it personally and get involved. A clean and healthy Sound is all of ours to keep."

Stormwater University is funded by the Washington State Department of Ecology under contract with the [City of Bellingham](http://cob.org).

Wastewater from vehicle cleaning and detailing businesses has the potential to discharge pollutants into the water through the storm drain system. Metals, oil, fuel, grease, soap, and even dirt can be deadly to fish and other aquatic life. Vehicle wash water should not be discharged into the storm drain system. Instead, it should be routed to the local wastewater treatment system once permission has been granted from the sewer system operator.

Only rain is allowed down the storm drain. Business owners can help keep pollution out of our waters by taking steps called best management practices. Many of these practices are simple, such as taking steps to prevent spills and leaks, filtering debris from wash water, and directing wash water to sanitary sewer drains.

[RE Sources for Sustainable Communities](http://www.re-sources.org) is a non-profit sustainability organization founded in 1982. RE Sources promotes sustainable communities through recycling, education, advocacy, and conservation of natural resources through a variety of programs. These programs include: the **North Sound Baykeeper**, an educator and advocate for the marine waters of Whatcom and Skagit Counties; **The RE Store**, seller and salvager of used building materials; **The Sustainable Living Center**, a place to gather and learn about sustainable practices; and **Sustainable Schools** in the schools, focusing on waste, air and climate change.