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FROM: PUGET SOUND CAR WASH ASSOCIATION

TOPIC: PUGET SOUND STORM WATER RUN OFF POLLUTION

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There's been a lot of press lately about car washing and storm water run off's affect on the Puget Sound. In a Frontline program airing this Tuesday, April 21 on KCTS Channel 9, journalist Hedrick Smith describes the result of his eighteen month investigation into the health of the Puget Sound. Smith says that, after years of suffering from industrial abuses, Puget Sound's biggest threat now comes from toxins entering through storm water. In this program entitled "Poisoned Waters", diver's film effluent from a drainpipe which is a main outfall for Seattle rainwater runoff entering the Puget Sound as, what Smith describes, "a brown, noxious soup of nastiness".

There are almost 3 million cars and trucks in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties combined. King County's Stormwater Prevention Manual, says that automobile washing is one of the most common residential activities that pollutes surface water, streams, creeks, lakes, and the Puget Sound. The Pollution Prevention Manual goes on to say that "In addition to soap and dirt, vehicle wash water carries oil, grease, solvents, nutrients, and metals to our local water bodies." Unregulated car washing is also listed under high-risk pollution generating activities in the Seattle Stormwater Grading and Drainage Control Code.

Some people that aren't informed about storm water pollution say, "I'm doing my part. I'm not washing my car". This statement reflects a common misconception. They are contributing to storm water pollution by allowing their car to get really dirty, really greasy, and allowing the rain to wash it all off onto the street, into the nearest storm drain, and into Puget Sound. As the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported, "A prime culprit in polluting storm water is cars, which shed pollutants even when they are functioning perfectly – not to mention leaking oil, antifreeze, steering fluid and numerous other pollutants as they age."

Maintaining your car by regular use of a professional car wash not only maintains the car's finish, but professional car washes eliminate oil, grease, and

heavy metals from entering our waterways, because the oil/water separators they use remove pollutants, which are ultimately pumped out and properly disposed of, and their wastewater is discharged into the sanitary sewer. Professional washes also use minimal water, compared to home car washing.

The Puget Sound Car Wash Association is a leader in the effort to protect streams, lakes, and the Puget Sound from pollution caused by washing cars and trucks. They have been awarded King County's Earth Hero Award as an industry leader for innovative and effective environmental programs and have received the Community Service Leadership Award from the International Car Wash Association. The Puget Sound Car Wash Association was founded in 1994. It is a local, professional organization of car wash owners and operators that promote high standards and practices in the industry, as well as environmental consciousness.

For more information, contact the Puget Sound Car Wash Association, 6351 Seaview Av NW, Seattle, WA 98107-2664, phone 206.622.8425 or by email at carwashassoc@qwestoffice.net

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