



STORMWATER PROGRAM
(800) 974-9794
www.lacity.org/san/swmd

STORMWATER PROGRAM SPLASH

To protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters while complying with all pollution abatement regulations

VOLUME I, ISSUE II

CITY OF LOS ANGELES • DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS • BUREAU OF SANITATION

SPRING 1999

Contents:

"Stormwater-Safe" Car Wash Event Held

1

City-wide Employee Training Launched

2

IN FOCUS:
Smart Gardening Tips in Reducing Pollutants

2

LA City & County Joint Ad Campaign

3

Public Agency Activities Guide Available

4

Stormwater Program Event Schedule

4



CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
BUREAU OF SANITATION

Senator Alarcon, Ed Begley Jr. Promote Environmentally-Safe Car Washes

By Angela M. Franklin
Public Information Officer

State Sen. Richard Alarcon (D-20) joined Ed Begley, Jr., actor/environmentalist and City of Los Angeles staff for a car wash fundraising event held February 20th at a Panorama City Mobil station to launch the City's campaign in promoting environmentally-safe car washes. "The City recognizes how important car wash fundraisers are for many schools and non-profit organizations. We are encouraging these groups to hold their car washes, but in a way that minimizes stormwater pollution," explained Stormwater Program Manager, Gary Lee Moore. "Many people do not realize that their car cleaning activities might be hurting the environment. The washwater, containing soap, dirt, and other residue drains off the cars and into the gutter, eventually flowing into nearby storm drains and straight to the ocean."

The main goal of this outreach effort is to distribute the free guide *How to Run a Successful Car Wash Fundraiser* to non-profit organizations and middle and high schools citywide. Written by Lance Winslow, III and edited by Stormwater Program staff, the guide targets reduction of polluted runoff from car wash fundraisers. "Good housekeeping tips" aimed at keeping pollution out of the storm drain system are stressed throughout the guide.



Begley demonstrated and explained these tips as he and Sen. Alarcon washed the first car of the day. "Preventing stormwater pollution is easy—minimizing the amount of soap used and diverting any runoff will prevent stormwater pollution and keep our neighborhoods and beaches cleaner and safer for everyone," said Begley.

The fundraiser was held to help send the Pacoima Singers Musical Theatre Group of Pacoima Middle



Angela M. Franklin

Pacoima Middle School students showed reporters how to control runoff using the tips described in the car wash guide.

School to Washington D.C. to participate in the America Sings Festival. Performing songs and dances between cars, 20 singing teenagers washed cars while executing environmentally-safe measures by using a pump, sandbags and a power washer. Sen. Alarcon praised the group's commitment to a clean car wash saying, "These kids are the greatest! I love what they're doing within our community to protect the environment."

How to Run a Successful Car Wash Fundraising Event Guide, is free to City schools, non-profit organizations, community, religious and youth groups. To receive a copy, please call the Stormwater Hotline at (800) 974-9794 or visit the City of Los Angeles' Stormwater Program web site at www.lacity.org/san/swmd.

The February 20th "environmentally-safe" carwash fundraising event received significant local media coverage.



Great Yards! Dirt Cheap! Smart Gardening Tips

By Reva Fabrikant
Solid Resources
City Recycling Division

This Spring, spend more time relaxing in a hammock, less time working in the yard, and help the environment at the same time. Be a Smart Gardener and let your garden do the work by following these three easy steps:

First, plant a water-wise garden. Water-miserly plants need less water, so you will save money and conserve precious water. Excess water flowing from your lawn can pick up toxins such as motor oil and anti-freeze and carry them into storm drains.

Second, leave grass clippings on the lawn. You will avoid the hassle of hauling bagged grass clippings to the curb and they will act as a natural fertilizer, recycling nutrients back into the soil.

Lastly, compost yard trimmings. Gather them into a pile and let nature work its magic to transform trimmings into nutrient-rich compost. After several months, spread the compost on top of the soil or mix it in. This home-grown fertilizer will create a lawn that is healthy enough to discourage pests naturally.



To learn more about the City's Smart Gardening Program, call (213) 847-1444 or attend one of the following free Smart Gardening Workshops.

Smart Gardening Workshop Locations

Saturday, May 15, 1999	Saturday, June 12, 1999
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
LA Valley College Parking Lot B 5800 Fulton Ave. Van Nuys, CA	Cal State Northridge 18111 Nordhoff St. Northridge, CA

Backyard composting bins (one per household with proof of City residency) will be available at the workshops for \$20 each.

In Focus, will highlight City programs whose activities may significantly improve storm water quality. If you would like to have your program featured in this column, please call (213) 847-4842.

Stormwater Training for all City Employees Commences

By Joyce Neal
Stormwater Program

To ensure compliance with the NPDES Permit, the City of Los Angeles, Stormwater Program has started a training program to educate all 41,000 City employees about stormwater pollution and the daily actions they can take to reduce the amount of toxins and pollutants flowing to the ocean through the municipal storm drain system.

"This is one of the largest training programs ever undertaken by a municipality, and the rewards will be cleaner, healthier neighborhoods, rivers and beaches that will benefit all residents" explained Michael Mullin, Stormwater Program Training Coordinator.

The Stormwater Program Training will consist of two phases.

The first phase includes the distribution of a general education training video along with a supplemental handbook to all City divisions and employees. The 20-minute video entitled, **Stormwater Pollution —What You Can Do**, was designed in a news show format, and identifies problems attributed to stormwater pollution. It concludes by demonstrating basic good housekeeping or, "best management practices" (BMPs) that will help reduce the amount of polluted runoff entering Santa Monica Bay and San Pedro Bays.

The handbook called **Preventing Stormwater Pollution**, is provided as a reference that reinforces the material outlined in the video and describes how employees can reduce stormwater pollution both on the job and at home. Each division within the City of Los Angeles will be responsible for ensuring that its employees view the video and receive a copy of the handbook for review.

Scheduled to begin in June 1999, the second phase of the Stormwater Program Training will focus on providing specialized instruction to employees whose job duties may directly and negatively impact urban runoff. In addition, City facilities will be required to develop *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans* (SWPPPs). These SWPPPs will outline specific best management practices to be adopted to reduce site runoff into the storm drain system.

To learn more about the Stormwater Training Program, call Michael Mullin at (213) 847-8691.



"Everyday" Items Targeted

NEW AD CAMPAIGN " WARNS" RESIDENTS

By Angela M. Franklin
Public Information Officer

What do cigarette butts, dog poop, and pesticides all have in common? They are all part of a mass media advertising campaign, which identifies them as major pollutants to Los Angeles storm drains and coastal waters.

For the second straight year, the City's Stormwater Program has collaborated with the County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works in developing a mass media campaign to reinforce simple, daily actions residents can take to help prevent stormwater pollution. The campaign borrows the easily recognizable Surgeon General's warning label from cigarette packs to educate residents about the negative impact these seemingly innocuous items, when improperly handled or cared for, can have on water quality.

"Partnering with the County of Los Angeles in this media campaign and other projects allows our agencies to save money and increase the effectiveness of our outreach efforts," said Gary Lee Moore, Stormwater Program Manager. Menerva Daoud, with the County's Environmental Programs Division, agreed and added, "Research shows that Los Angeles residents have a desire to do the *right* thing once they realize what they are doing is harmful."

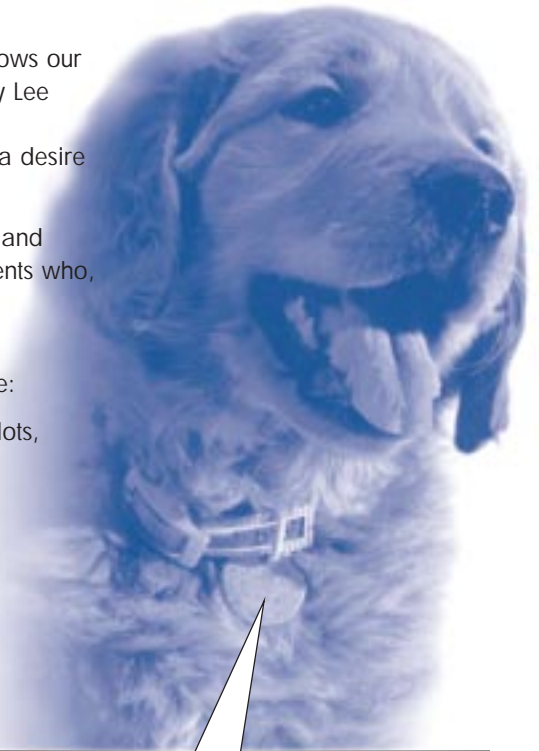
Running through May 1999 and using general market and Spanish-language radio, print and outdoor advertising, this year's campaign targets the largest audience consisting of residents who, while often unaware of their polluting behaviors, are willing to change if given solutions. This group comprises approximately 83% of the 10 million Los Angeles County residents.

The simple pollution prevention solutions encouraged by the advertising campaign include:

- Putting trash where it belongs—in a trash can. Not in streets, sidewalks or parking lots,
- Picking up and disposing of animal waste properly, and,
- Using appropriate amounts of fertilizer and pesticides or using natural alternatives

The advertisements will also run on the City's Department of Transportation's DASH buses citywide through 1999.

WARNING: Dropping your cigarette butt in the street pollutes more than the pavement. It threatens public health by contaminating rivers, lakes and local beaches. So use an ashtray, and put your butt where it belongs.



WARNING: Leaving a puppy's poop on the ground soils more than the street. It spreads disease and contaminates rivers, lakes and local beaches. So pick up after your pooch, and help curb pollution.

Estimated Totals of Items Discarded Monthly on City Streets

- 870,000 cigarette butts
- 69,000 ashtrays emptied
- 565,000 pieces of trash

Ballona Creek storm drain channel (left) shortly after a rainstorm in 1998. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works collected over four tons of trash from this channel during this single rain event.

Assistance with July 1999 Deadline

Public Agency Activities Program Guide Introduced

By Randy Price

Stormwater NPDES Permit Compliance Section

To assist City departments in complying with current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit requirements in reducing the amount of runoff from City facilities, the Stormwater Management Division (SMD) has prepared the Public Agency Activities Program Guide.

The guide will be distributed to all City departments by May 1999, and presents the minimum requirements that must be adopted by every department's facilities to ensure Permit compliance. It also stresses the importance of developing good working habits and maintaining one's awareness of daily job-site activities that have the potential to pollute the region's waterways. The guide focuses on nine City activity areas:

- Sewage Systems Operations
- Public Construction Activities
- Vehicle Maintenance
- Material Storage Facilities
- Landscape/Recreational Facilities
- Storm Drain Operations
- Parking Facilities
- Streets/Roads Maintenance
- Public Industrial Activities
- Emergency Procedures

In addition to adopting the practices outlined in the guide, departments must keep appropriate records, report on the status of the program, provide oversight and train staff on the proper implementation of the guidelines. Good departmental record keeping procedures will be necessary since compliance with these requirements will be tracked and monitored by the Regional Water Quality Control Board, as well as SMD, through the annual reporting process, inspections, certifications and audits. SMD staff will continue working with the designated coordinators for all departments and bureaus to keep them informed of Permit requirements.

"It is time for all City departments to do their part in improving the health of local rivers and bays," said Judith A. Wilson, Director, Bureau of Sanitation. "Our NPDES Permit requires the City to have certain practices and policies in place by July 30, 1999. The Public Agency Activities Program Guide outlines these requirements."

For questions or inquiries regarding the Public Agency Activities Program Guide or your department's role and responsibilities, please call (213) 847-6350.

Look for the Stormwater Program booth at the following community events:

- April 24** Earth Fair, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
2489 Stephen White Dr.
San Pedro, CA
- 24** Environment/Health Fair
Centro de Ninos
379 S. Loma Dr.
Los Angeles, CA
- 24** March of Dimes Walk
Griffith Park
Los Angeles, CA
- April 30** Cinco de Mayo Celebration
125 Paseo de la Plaza
Los Angeles, CA
- May 1** LA River Watershed Council Conference
Department of Water and Power
111 N. Hope St.
Los Angeles, CA
- 8** Great LA Dog Walk
Griffith Park
Los Angeles, CA
- 15** Hyperion Plant Dedication
12000 Vista del Mar
Playa del Rey, CA
- June 5** Whale Fiesta, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium
2489 Stephen White Dr.
San Pedro, CA
- 5** LAPD CPAB Summit
743 S. Lucerne
Los Angeles, CA

Splash, the Stormwater Program newsletter is published quarterly. If you would like to receive future issues or be included on our mailing list, please send a letter of request to:

**Stormwater Program
Public Education Section**

**650 S. Spring Street Ste 700
Los Angeles, CA 90014**

Please include your return address and/or mail stop. You may also call:

(800) 974-9794

EDITOR: JOYCE NEAL
LAYOUT & DESIGN: OSCAR AMARO
PHOTOGRAPHY: ANGELA FRANKLIN
OSCAR AMARO

As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.