

# Water To Be Reused At Soquel Car Wash

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What's the best way to save 450,000 gallons of fresh water a month during and after the water shortage?

Reconvert a car wash so that the water is cleaned and reused, that's how, according to Karl Cathrein, owner of Soquel Car Wash in Santa Cruz.

The car wash at 2001 Soquel Ave. currently is undergoing \$10,000 in improvements which will result in a 75 per cent cutback in its water consumption, Cathrein said.

"In the old system, we were using 60 gallons of fresh water per car. In the new system, we're using 15 gallons. That's where you get your 75 per cent savings in water consumption," he said.

The major change in the system is the installation of four compartments or sumps under the car wash capable of holding 3,000 gallons. The sumps calm down the water and remove dirt and grit down to 100 microns, Cathrein explained.

The water is then pumped out of the sumps and into two hydrocyclone filters that clean all particles out down to 5 microns. The only substances that are not removed are the shampoo and soap because the water is reused to wash cars, Cathrein explained.

"In the old system you had a

pre-rinse and one final rinse. We used 30 gallons of fresh water in each rinse. In the new system we'll have two final rinses. The first one uses reclaimed water. My intention is to use 60 gallons in the each cycle of reclaimed water and only 15 gallons of fresh water in the final rinse," he explained.

The fresh water is used to wash off chemical residues, he added.

Cathrein has already completed the first stage of the system which includes a reduction in the water pressure used to wash a car from 70 to 40 pounds.

Additional chemicals were added to the rinse solution, brush lubricators were made smaller and wind barriers that keep water from blowing away were installed during the first stage.

With an estimated 10,000 cars going through the car wash every month this summer, the car wash would have used 600,000 gallons of fresh water per month under the old system, Cathrein explained.

With the completion of stage one, Cathrein's water bill from the middle of April through the first half of May showed that the car wash had used 14,750 gallons of fresh water to wash 6,000 cars. That's 24 gallons per car compared to the 48 gallons used the previous month before the first improvements were

made.

Cathrein estimates an even more dramatic reduction once the sumps and filtering system is installed.

But how does using an estimated 15 gallons of fresh water per car in a car wash compare to washing a car at home?

Cathrein claims he has made tests which show that it takes 250 gallons to wash a car with a garden hose and 30 gallons to wash a car with a bucket as required by the county's water ordinance.

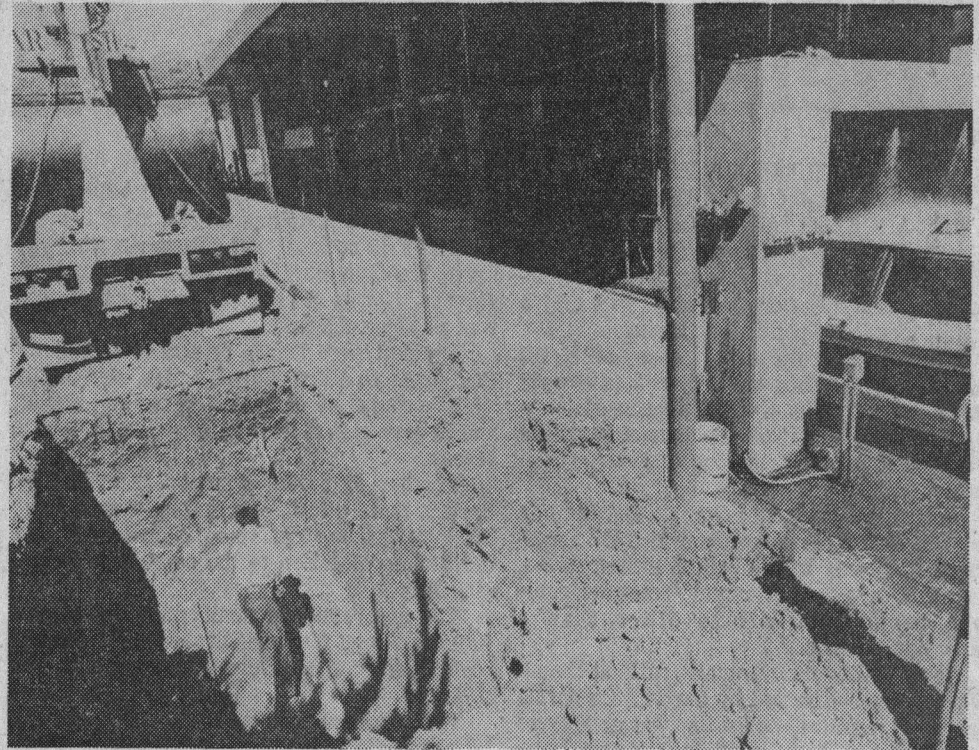
After completion of the total project, in one month the car wash will use only 60 per cent of the 250,000 gallons DeLaveaga Golf Course uses everyday, Cathrein said.

Santa Cruz is currently using 1.5 million gallons of water a day more than it should to avert a water crisis and City Water Director Morris Allen said that the city is "very, very pleased" with the improvements at Soquel Car Wash.

"This is the type of community response we'd hoped to have from everyone . . ." Allen said. "We asked the car wash to do several things to reduce their water consumption, including a recycling system, and they have done everything."

Cathrein has been the owner of the car wash since 1964. He settled in Santa Cruz in 1963 after leaving his native West Germany and lives here with his wife and their four children.

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Workers make alterations at Soquel Car Wash.

## Using Your Own Words Not Always Effective

SAN DIEGO (AP) — When Donald Parker urged his fifth-grade students to write a state legislator about a measure they disagreed with, he thought he was promoting a good exercise in civics.

That civics lesson, Parker said Saturday, might get him

The kids, mostly 11-year-olds at Sequoia Elementary School, took Parker at his word and used their own words — most of them foul — in chastising Sen. David Roberti, D-Los Angeles, for his vote against a coastal protection bill that proved to be the measure's demise.

Diego City School District Superintendent Thomas Goodman was in Sacramento when the letters arrived, lobbying for passage of a school financing bill.

"Goodman was shocked, apologized, and said he would get on it," said Roberti, who