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## **BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: Just a pint for a cleaner car**



Craig Nash of ProntoWash applies a solution of water, detergent, and wax to the hood of a jaguar at the location in the U.S. Bank building parking garage in Newport Beach on Friday morning.

Company gives environmentally conscious car owners chance to help Earth.

**By Chris Caesar**

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Normally, an ecologically minded Newport-Mesa resident eager to keep their car flashy and attractive faces a terrible dilemma — to clean, or not to clean.

Experts say using a garden hose to clean a vehicle can use more than 100 gallons of water and add pollutants that can contaminate local bodies of water.

“Water contamination and conservation are important issues in Southern California,” said Sunny Jiang, an environmental engineering professor at UCI. “With run-off [from a car wash], you can pick up organisms, fecal matter and chemicals and cause broader ecosystem damage to fishes and other aquatic species.”

But, following the trend toward green business practices, one car wash chain provides a biodegradable, clean and ecological way of cleaning your car — without diminishing quality or increasing cost.

ProntoWash, an Argentine company started in 2001, has recently branched out to a number of American locations, including one in Newport Beach. Through a number of innovative techniques the company has pioneered, the group has managed to cut down the amount of water used in a car wash to a single pint — one-eighth of a gallon, about 99% less water than conventional washers use.

The small amount leaves no run-off and still leaves a car looking new every time it leaves the facility, said the company’s southern Californian master franchiser, Jim Fitz. The secret lies in a water atomizer, which lightly sprays waters and other eco-friendly chemicals onto the car, and allows hand washers to meticulously mop up the fluids

“I’m really into this for a couple of reasons,” he said. “One, I want to pass this Earth onto my kids and their kids. The other thing is that, from a business standpoint ... ProntoWash is a growing franchise that can bring these standards to the industry, that we can consolidate under one brand — something that’s never been done on a national level.”

Another element ProntoWash provides is convenience. Typically located in the mall parking lots or business buildings, customers can park and return to their sparkling car after a day of work or shopping.

“What we’re really proud of is giving people their time back,” Fitz said.

Stephanie Barger is the executive director of the Costa Mesa-based Earth Resource Foundation, a nonprofit that helps consumers make environmentally sound purchases.

After having her car cleaned with the ProntoWash system, Barger said she was impressed with the product and its ecological implications.

“It’s definitely a superior product — the way it cleans your car alone is fantastic,” she said. “Especially as we enter our eighth year of drought this year, and our snow pack is at an all-time low, we need to conserve water any way we can.”

Prices range from \$15 for a standard wash to \$165 for a full detail wash.

**PRONTOWASH**

**SPECIALTY:** Car wash using about one pint of water

**HOURS:**

**LOCATION:** 4100 Newport Place Drive, Newport Beach

**CONTACT:** Call Craig Nash at (714) 342-9621 or e-mail [newporttower@prontowash.com](mailto:newporttower@prontowash.com), or visit [prontowash.com](http://prontowash.com).

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