

## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Caltrans Launches New Stormwater Pollution Prevention Campaign to Help Reduce Highway Pollution Runoff** *Campaign Focuses on Educating the Public and Changing Behavior*

SACRAMENTO – Caltrans today unveiled its new stormwater public education and outreach campaign “*Protect Every Drop*” to educate Californians about the sources and pathways of stormwater pollution, and encourage motorists to reduce the pollutants that affect water quality in California’s streams, rivers, lakes and coastal waters, keeping them drinkable, swimmable and fishable.

“Clean water is essential for our quality of life in California, and it’s important to ‘*Protect Every Drop*,’” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “Every motorist needs to do their part to keep California’s waterways clean.”

The campaign will address several actions the public can take, including:

- Performing routine vehicle and tire maintenance, which reduces pollution from vehicles.
- Properly disposing of trash and recycling.
- Covering truck loads that may fall or blow off during travel.

The “*Protect Every Drop*” campaign builds on the past successful “*Don’t Trash California*” public awareness campaign, broadening the focus beyond litter and trash to address other stormwater pollutants such as sediment, metals from tire and brake wear, fluid leaks and contents from unsecured vehicle loads.

The campaign will also address other pollutants found in highway stormwater that may originate from non-highway sources such as pesticides and bacteria from natural sources.

Caltrans owns and operates storm drain systems along more than 15,000 miles of the state highway system, which discharge into every major watershed of the state. Stormwater picks up pollution washed off of vehicles and roadways when it rains, which makes its way through ditches and pipes that make up storm drain systems. The polluted water then discharges either to an adjacent city or county storm drain system, or to a stream, river or lake – and eventually to bays and the ocean.

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“Stormwater testing shows that virtually all our lakes, rivers, bays and ocean waters get polluted after it rains, all across California,” said State Water Board Member Steven Moore. “Some of those most impacted waters are those around our bigger cities, like Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose and Sacramento. The pollutants that can be carried in stormwater impair the beneficial uses of our waters that belong to all Californians. We can all contribute to helping keep every drop of water in our rivers, lakes and ocean clean.”

### **About the Campaign**

The three-year *“Protect Every Drop”* educational campaign will include a cohesive and integrated public relations, advertising and community outreach program across California in order to help change the behavior of Californians in a way that leads to improved water quality. The campaign is being guided by a steering committee that includes Caltrans, the State Water Boards and the California Stormwater Quality Association.

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