

The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Car Smash Safety Procedures

Vehicle Preparation

Prepare the vehicle as follows before bringing it onto campus.

1. Remove all fluids including but not limited to:
 - Coolant
 - Gasoline/fuel
 - Washer fluid
 - Power steering fluid
 - Brake fluid
 - Automatic/manual transmission fluid
 - Differential fluid
 - Engine oil
 - All other fluids or oils
2. Remove all gasoline/fuel tank(s).
3. Remove all batteries.
4. Remove all glass and mirrors.
5. If equipped, remove the following items:
 - Air Bags (**Caution:** Only qualified mechanics should remove air bags)
 - Mercury switches
 - AC refrigerant

Event Site

Place the vehicle in an appropriate site that meets the following criteria:

- Select a level, paved area for the event site.
- Ensure the site allows free access to the smashed vehicle and does not obstruct campus traffic flow.
- Establish a minimum 20-foot perimeter around the vehicle using barrier tape, leaving a designated access opening for authorized participants.
- Keep all individuals, except the active participant, at least 20 feet away from the vehicle.
- Keep the vehicle away from storm drains to prevent fluid runoff into stormwater systems.
- Position the vehicle on a single sheet of heavy-duty polyethylene sheeting (at least 6-mil thick) to catch any remaining fluid spills.
- Chock vehicle wheels to prevent unintended movement.

Release of Liability (Waiver) and Insurance Requirements

1. Require all participants to sign a liability waiver before participating.
2. Ensure a parent or legal guardian signs the waiver for any participant under age 18.
3. Obtain a waiver template from the Office of Risk Management & Compliance (ORMC) (riskmanagement@uah.edu or 256-824-6875).

Important: You may need event liability insurance. Consult the [UAH Facility and Grounds Use Insurance Requirements Policy \(06.08.10\)](#) (opens a new tab) or contact the ORMC for guidance.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Failure to wear PPE shall prevent individuals from participating. All participants must wear the following PPE:

1. Heavy-duty leather work gloves. Multiple sizes should be available to ensure proper fit.
2. ANSI-certified safety goggles.
3. Closed-toe shoes must be worn (sneakers/tennis shoes are acceptable). No open-toe shoes (such as sandals or flip-flops) or bare feet are permitted.
4. All PPE must be inspected between each use. Damaged PPE must be removed immediately.

Safety Planning, Fire Response, and Spill Prevention

1. One 10-lb. or larger ABC multipurpose fire extinguisher must be located within the cordoned-off area. Event staff must be familiar with the proper operation and use of a fire extinguisher.
2. The event organizer should have an event-specific fire safety and emergency response plan on file with the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS).
 - Plans should include first aid response, emergency medical response, fire response, severe weather, and security/safety response considerations.
3. One bag of clay absorbent material (such as Oil-Dri or kitty litter) shall be present in the event of a vehicle fluid spill.
4. Used absorbent material shall be temporarily stored in suitable plastic containers, such as plastic pails or buckets.
5. Event staff working with used absorbent materials and/or cleaning up spills must wear appropriate PPE, including splash-proof goggles and chemical-resistant gloves. Spill response PPE must be maintained on site at the event.

Sledgehammers

Sledgehammers to be used for the event must be intact, safe, and meet the following requirements:

1. The head of the sledgehammer must be flat on both ends. No edged or axed ends are permitted.
2. It is recommended that the handle of the sledgehammer be made of fiberglass or composite material, as wooden handles are more likely to break.
3. Sledgehammers must be in good physical shape, and the heads must be tightly attached. The sledgehammers must be inspected for damage periodically during the event (e.g., after every participant). Damaged sledgehammers must be immediately removed from the event.
4. It is recommended that sledgehammers weigh less than 10 pounds.

5. Participants must not be allowed on any part of the vehicle at any time. Feet must always remain on the ground.

Conclusion of Event

After the car smashing activity:

1. Event plans must include arrangements to remove the vehicle from campus immediately following the event for legal and proper disposal.
2. The ground area around and underneath the vehicle must be surveyed for pieces that may have broken off during the event. Any pieces should be placed back into the vehicle prior to removal from campus. The area must be swept clean.
3. The plastic sheeting under the vehicle should be inspected for automotive fluids.
 - If free of automotive fluids, the plastic sheeting may be disposed of into the trash.
 - OEHS (256-824-2171) must be contacted immediately to dispose of residual automotive fluids or spill cleanup debris.

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