



41ST ANNUAL PRODUCT SHOW MARCH 24-25, 2026 VENDORS GET DISCOUNT SHIPPING CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS

Spring Maintenance and Site Prep: Get Your Carwash Ready For Peak Season



Spring is the perfect time to shake off the winter blues and get your carwash in top shape. With the busy season ahead, operators need to focus on equipment, facilities, and customer experience to maximize efficiency, revenue, and satisfaction. Proper site prep now can save headaches later and ensure your business runs smoothly all season long.

1. Inspect and Service Equipment

Winter can take a toll on carwash systems, from pumps and motors to conveyor belts and brushes. Start with a full equipment inspection:

- Check high-pressure pumps, motors, and vacuum systems for wear or leaks.
- Examine wash brushes, cloths, and nozzles for fraying or damage.
- Test chemical dosing systems to ensure proper calibration.

Pro Tip: Keep a log of maintenance and repairs. This makes future troubleshooting faster and helps identify recurring issues before they escalate.

2. Winter Cleanup & Facility Prep

Even if your wash stayed operational through winter, debris, salt, and grime can accumulate. Proper spring cleaning ensures a safe, inviting, and efficient site:

- Sweep and pressure-wash lots, lanes, and bays.
- Inspect and repair concrete cracks or potholes.
- Remove any debris from drains and gutters to prevent flooding.
- Power-wash exterior walls, windows, and signage for a fresh look.

A clean, well-maintained facility reinforces professionalism and boosts customer confidence.

3. Upgrade Safety & Compliance

Spring is also the perfect time to check safety systems and regulatory compliance:

- Test fire extinguishers, emergency stops, and safety signage.
- Ensure chemical storage is up to code and clearly labeled.
- Review employee safety protocols and retrain as needed.

Safety First

"A well-maintained carwash isn't just about clean cars—it's about protecting your team and your customers. Safety checks are a must."

4. Optimize the Customer Experience

Site prep isn't just about equipment; it's also about customer satisfaction:

- Check point-of-sale systems, loyalty apps, and signage for accuracy and visibility.
- Restock consumables like towels, wipes, and tokens.
- Inspect lighting and landscaping—bright, inviting spaces keep customers coming back.

Even small improvements—fresh mulch, clean windows, and clear signage—can make a big impact on perceived value.

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SPRING 2026

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Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear HCA Members and Industry Partners,



We're just weeks away from the **2026 HCA Product & Equipment Show**, happening **March 24–25** at the **Beardmore Event Center** in Bellevue, Nebraska! This year's theme, **"Wash Intelligence: Where AI Meets ROI,"** puts a spotlight on the cutting-edge technologies and strategies shaping the future of the carwash industry.

We're especially excited to welcome our **keynote speaker, Miguel Gonzalez**, President and CEO of Micrologic. Miguel is a nationally recognized expert in **artificial intelligence and business innovation**, and he'll be sharing practical, actionable strategies for applying AI in real-world carwash operations. His dynamic presentation will not only

give you a glimpse into the future but also provide tools and ideas you can implement immediately to boost efficiency and profitability.

This show isn't just about listening—it's about **learning, networking, and leaving with ideas you can put to work immediately**. From hands-on education sessions to innovative products and solutions from our exhibitors, the 2026 HCA Show is your opportunity to connect, grow, and get ahead for the year to come.

Mark your calendars, get your tickets, and start planning your schedule—you won't want to miss this inspiring, forward-thinking event.

Thank you for being a part of our community. We can't wait to see you at the show and celebrate all the exciting opportunities ahead for our industry!

Sincerely,

Kristen Corbisiero

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2026 HCA PRODUCT SHOW

**WASH INTELLIGENCE:
Where AI Meets ROI**



HEAR FROM OUR
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

MIGUEL GONZALEZ

National AI & Business
Innovation Expert

MARCH 24-25 | BEARDMORE EVENT
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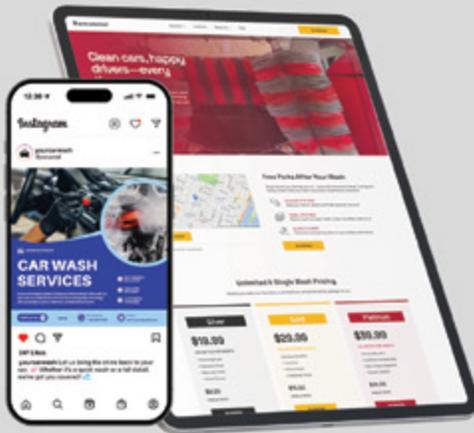




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41ST ANNUAL PRODUCT SHOW

Wash Intelligence: Where AI Meets ROI

SHOW AGENDA

Tuesday 3-24: Day 1

- 8:00am - 12:00pm Registration Opens
- 8:00am - 10:00am Exhibitor Setup
- 9:00am - 11:00am Continental Breakfast AND Keynote speaker: Miguel Gonzalez, a National AI & Business Innovation Expert from Micrologic
- 10:00am - 1:00pm Breakout Discussions: **What's on Your Mind and What is Going on in Your Business**, hosted by HCA Board Member Tony Petta from Quick Shine Express Carwash
- 11:00pm PM Lunch
- 12:00pm - 4:00 PM Floor Open! Collect signatures on your BINGO card for a chance to win prizes!
- 2:00pm - 3:00pm Educational Seminar 1 Presented by Mike Ohlinger from OhmCo: **From Google to Generative AI: Rethinking Your Car Wash Web Content**
- 3:00 - 4:00pm MONEX educational seminar by Quentin Vitko: **The Future of Payment Technology**: Explore how modern payment systems, data analytics, and emerging AI tools are transforming how car-washes accept and manage transactions.
- 4:00pm - 5:00pm Show Reception & Awards w/cocktails & heavy hors d'oeuvres
- 5:00pm - 7:00pm Live Band: Enjoy a high-energy performance by **Chad Lee**, delivering an electrifying mix of country hits, classics, and crowd favorites

Wednesday 3-25: Day 2

- 8:00am - 9:00am AM Breakfast Buffet & Annual Meeting
- 9:00am - 12:00pm Carwash Tours, a rep from each location will ride the bus with us to offer discussion
- 12:00pm - 1:30pm Lunch with discussion by our sponsor, WindTrax, Inc.
- 1:00pm - 5:00pm PM Floor Opens – Day 2 Specials
- 1:30pm - 1:30 pm Raffle drawing ***Must be present to win!***
- 2:00pm - 3:00pm Educational Seminar 2 Presented by Hopkins Printing
- 3:00pm - 4:00pm Educational Seminar 3 Presented by Johnathan Kierman from WelcomeMat: **Car Wash Marketing in 2026: Winning in the Era of SEO, AEO & Intelligent Search**
- 5:00pm - 7:30pm Exhibitor Move Out

Agenda subject to change

The Beardmore Events Center
3730 Raynor Parkway, Bellevue, NE 68123

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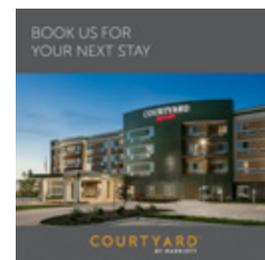
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5. Plan Promotions & Marketing

Spring is a prime opportunity to boost traffic:

- Launch a spring cleaning promotion or discounted wash packages.
- Promote loyalty programs to turn one-time visitors into repeat customers.
- Leverage social media and email campaigns to highlight seasonal specials.

Marketing your spring readiness reinforces the message that your wash is professional, efficient, and customer-focused.

6. Staff Training & Scheduling

With longer days and increased traffic, spring demands well-prepared staff:

- Review operations procedures and customer service standards.
- Cross-train employees to handle multiple roles during peak times.
- Adjust schedules for higher traffic and holiday weekends.

A confident, knowledgeable team ensures your spring season runs smoothly and customers leave satisfied.

Looking Ahead: Make Spring Maintenance a Habit

Spring prep isn't just a one-time task—it sets the tone for the entire season. Establishing a checklist and routine ensures equipment longevity, operational efficiency, and a positive customer experience.

Spring Maintenance Checklist

- Full equipment inspection & preventive maintenance
- Winter cleanup: lots, bays, drains, and signage
- Safety and compliance checks
- Customer experience upgrades (POS, signage, lighting)
- Staff training & schedule optimization
- Marketing & promotional planning

By tackling these tasks now, operators can avoid costly downtime, improve efficiency, and provide a top-tier experience for customers when traffic spikes. Spring is the season to shine—both literally and figuratively.

Spring Into Growth: Smart Advertising Strategies for Carwash Owners and Operators

For carwash owners and operators, spring is more than just the end of winter — it's one of the most important opportunities of the year to attract new customers and grow revenue. After months of road salt, sand, and harsh weather, drivers are eager to clean their vehicles and start fresh. At the same time, warmer weather means more driving, more road trips, and more opportunities for customers to visit your wash.

The businesses that benefit the most from this seasonal surge are the ones that prepare their advertising early and strategically. Spring marketing doesn't have to mean huge budgets or complicated campaigns. Instead, it's about being visible, relevant, and easy for customers to choose when they're ready to wash.

Below are practical strategies carwash operators can use to make the most of spring advertising.



Understanding the Spring Opportunity

Winter is often focused on maintenance washes and weather-driven traffic, but spring brings a different mindset for customers. People begin thinking about deep cleaning — both at home and in their vehicles. It's the season of renewal.

This shift creates a powerful marketing angle for carwashes. Customers are looking for ways to remove months of salt buildup, clean interiors, and restore their vehicles after a long winter. Messaging that highlights "spring cleaning for your car", salt removal, or protecting your paint after winter damage can resonate strongly.

Spring is also a time when many drivers reconsider their habits. If they've been washing less during the winter or visiting competitors, this is your opportunity to bring them back. Refresh Your Message

One of the simplest ways to advertise effectively in the spring is by updating your messaging to match the season. This doesn't require a full rebrand or expensive campaign. Small adjustments can make a big difference.

For example, instead of generic messaging like "Best Car Wash in Town," focus on seasonal benefits:

- "Wash Away Winter Salt"
- "Spring Clean Your Ride"
- "Restore Your Shine After Winter"

Visuals matter as well. Bright colors, sunshine imagery, and clean vehicles can signal that the season has changed and it's time to wash again.

Your exterior signage, digital menu boards, and website banners should all reflect this seasonal transition. Customers should immediately feel that your wash is ready for spring.

Leverage Digital and Social Media

Today's customers often discover and evaluate businesses online before they ever visit. That means your digital presence plays a crucial role in spring advertising.

Start by reviewing your Google Business Profile. Ensure your hours are correct, your photos are updated, and your reviews are current. Adding new photos of clean vehicles, your wash tunnel, or staff members preparing for spring can help attract attention.

Social media is another powerful tool for carwash operators. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram allow you to showcase the experience of your wash while staying connected to your local community.

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“Heartland Express” Shipping Program



Want to attend all 3 Spring Car Wash Trade Shows and save BIG money on shipping???

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ABF Point of Contact: Timothy Allison, Senior Director Tradeshow Division
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May 11-13, 2026

Heartland Carwash Association's Newest Board Memembers



John Pinson
Vice President
Micrologic

John Pison is based in St. Louis, Missouri, and has been in the carwash industry since 1997. His background includes 16 years in operations and the last 11 years on the vendor side. John spent a decade with CSI/NCS and currently serves as an Enterprise Sales Manager with Micrologic.

In addition, John own a self-serve wash in Missouri. He has served on various boards, including local baseball leagues, and is an active member of both the Elks and the Knights of Columbus. John can be reached at John.Pinson@micrologic.com or 510-725-7647.



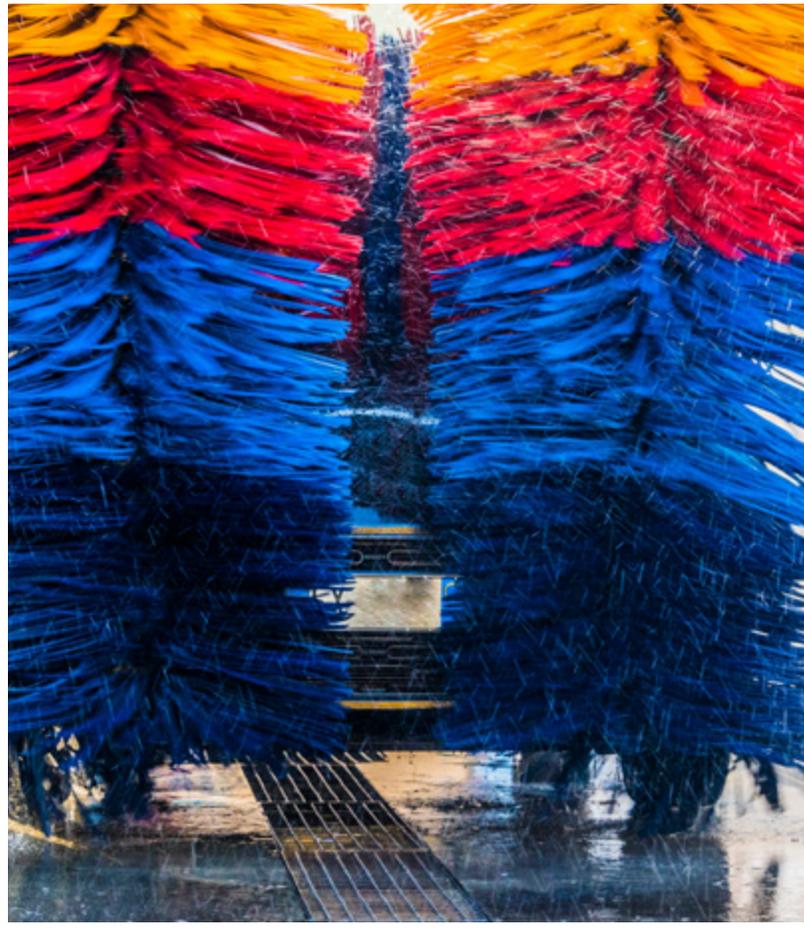
Mel Ohlinger
Board of Directors
OhmCo

I am a data-driven CEO, Navy Veteran, and carwash enthusiast with a background in digital marketing and programming. My company makes carwash websites look great, work great, and rank competitively.



Mike Ohlinger
Board of Directors
OhmCo

Synergistic para-thinking to coordinate with out-of-box concepts at post-30,000 ft. views with the ultimate goal of merging conceptual and "leaning-forward" values with classic principles: One more word and I'll barf. Need help with carwash marketing? Go to OhmCo.



Preparing for the Rush: Staff Training and Customer Education for the Spring Carwash Season

For carwash owners and operators, spring represents one of the most important transitions of the year. After months of winter weather, road salt, and inconsistent wash traffic, warmer temperatures bring a surge of customers eager to clean and protect their vehicles. This seasonal shift creates tremendous opportunity—but only for operators who are prepared.



While advertising and promotions help bring customers through the door, the real difference between a busy wash and a thriving one often comes down to two things: well-trained staff and educated customers. When employees understand how to deliver great service and customers understand the value of what you offer, spring can become a powerful growth season rather than just a temporary spike in traffic.

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Continued from page 6

Some simple social media ideas for spring include:

- Posting before-and-after photos of vehicles
- Sharing short videos of your wash in action
- Promoting limited-time spring wash packages
- Highlighting your team preparing for the busy season

Even one or two posts per week can keep your business visible and remind customers that it's time to clean their cars.

Promote Memberships

Spring is an excellent time to grow your unlimited wash membership program. Many customers who return to the wash after winter are open to new habits, especially if they plan to keep their vehicle clean throughout the warmer months.

Consider promoting a Spring Membership Special, such as:

- The first month discounted
- A free upgrade on the first wash
- A limited-time "spring shine" membership bundle

Advertising these offers through signage, email, and social media can help convert occasional visitors into recurring customers. Membership programs not only increase revenue but also create consistent traffic throughout the year.

Use Email to Reconnect With Customers

If you've collected customer emails or phone numbers, spring is the perfect time to reconnect with them.

A simple email campaign reminding customers to "wash away winter" can drive immediate visits. Include a coupon, a membership promotion, or a limited-time upgrade to encourage action.

Email marketing is especially effective because it reaches customers who have already interacted with your business. They know your wash and are more likely to return with the right reminder.

Partner With Local Businesses

Spring advertising doesn't always have to happen online. Local partnerships can be incredibly effective for carwash operators.

Consider collaborating with nearby businesses such as:

- Auto dealerships
- Oil change centers
- Tire shops
- Convenience stores

These businesses share a similar customer base, and cross-promotions can benefit everyone involved. For example, you might offer a discounted wash to customers who show a receipt from a partner business, while they display your promotional materials in their waiting area. Community partnerships not only increase visibility but also strengthen your reputation as a local business.

Highlight the Experience

Customers don't just visit a carwash for a clean vehicle — they visit for convenience, speed, and experience. Your advertising should reflect this.

Instead of focusing only on price, emphasize what makes your wash unique:

- Fast wash times
- High-quality equipment
- Eco-friendly practices
- Friendly staff
- Convenient hours

If your wash has features like free vacuums, towel service, or advanced wash technology, make sure those benefits are clearly communicated in your advertising.

When customers understand what makes your wash different, they are more likely to choose you over competitors.



Prepare for Increased Traffic

While advertising is important, the customer experience ultimately determines whether people return. As spring traffic increases, make sure your operations are ready.

Check equipment, update signage, and ensure your team is prepared for higher volumes. A positive first visit can turn a new customer into a long-term supporter of your business.

Spring advertising is most effective when it's backed by a strong, consistent experience.

Turning Spring Into Long-Term Growth

Spring offers a natural marketing advantage for carwash operators. Customers are already motivated to clean their vehicles — your job is to make sure they choose your wash when they do.

By refreshing your messaging, strengthening your digital presence, promoting memberships, and engaging with your community, you can turn seasonal interest into lasting customer relationships.

With the right advertising approach, spring isn't just a busy season — it's the start of sustained growth for your carwash business.

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Investing time in staff training and customer education before the spring rush begins can set the tone for the entire year.

Why Spring Is the Most Important Training Season

Winter operations can be unpredictable. Weather conditions, freezing temperatures, and fluctuating traffic often mean that staffing levels shift and routines change. When spring arrives, however, volume increases quickly. Many drivers who avoided washing during cold weather suddenly return, bringing with them months of salt, sand, and grime.

This sudden influx can overwhelm teams that aren't fully prepared.

Spring training is about ensuring that every team member—from new hires to experienced staff—understands the expectations for customer service, safety, and operational efficiency. Even small improvements in these areas can have a major impact when traffic increases. Operators who dedicate time to training early in the season often see better throughput, fewer mistakes, and more satisfied customers.

Reinforcing Customer Service Standards

Carwash customers typically spend only a few minutes at a location, but those moments shape their perception of your entire business. Friendly greetings, clear instructions, and helpful recommendations can transform a routine wash into a positive experience that customers want to repeat.

Spring is an ideal time to reinforce customer service basics with your team.

Staff should be trained to greet customers confidently, answer common questions, and guide vehicles safely through the wash process. For locations that offer multiple wash packages, employees should also understand how to explain the differences between options.

This doesn't require aggressive upselling. Instead, the goal is simple: help customers choose the service that best meets their needs.

When employees feel comfortable communicating with customers, they create a welcoming atmosphere that builds trust and loyalty.

Teaching Staff to Educate Customers

One of the most overlooked roles of carwash employees is that of educator. Many customers don't fully understand the benefits of modern wash technology, protective coatings, or regular vehicle maintenance. A knowledgeable team can help bridge that gap.

For example, customers may not realize how damaging winter salt can be to paint, undercarriages, and metal components. Staff members who can explain the importance of removing salt buildup—especially early in the spring—provide valuable information that encourages repeat visits.

Similarly, if your wash offers protective products such as wax, sealants, or ceramic treatments, employees should understand how those services benefit the customer. Instead of simply naming the upgrade, they can explain what it does and why it matters.

This approach transforms a transaction into a conversation about vehicle care.

Preparing Staff for Increased Volume

As spring traffic grows, efficiency becomes just as important as customer interaction. Training should include operational practices that help the wash run smoothly during busy periods. This may involve reviewing vehicle loading procedures, clarifying safety protocols, and ensur-

ing that team members know their roles during peak hours.

For example, tunnel washes often rely on clear coordination between staff directing vehicles and those operating equipment. Even small miscommunications can slow down the line or create confusion for customers.

By practicing these procedures ahead of time, teams can develop a rhythm that keeps vehicles moving safely and efficiently.

High-volume periods also require employees to stay calm under pressure. Reinforcing teamwork and communication can make a big difference when lines begin to form.

Helping Customers Understand Spring Car Care

While staff training is critical, customer education is equally important. Many drivers simply don't know how winter conditions affect their vehicles or how regular washing protects them. Spring is the perfect time to share this information.

Educational messaging can be integrated into signage, social media posts, website content, or conversations at the wash. Topics might include:

- The importance of removing winter salt buildup
- How road chemicals can damage paint and metal
- The benefits of protective wax or sealants
- Why regular washing extends a vehicle's lifespan

These messages not only inform customers but also reinforce the value of professional car-washing.

When customers understand the "why" behind your services, they are more likely to visit regularly and invest in higher-level wash packages.

Using Visual Education

Sometimes the most effective education is visual. Before-and-after photos of vehicles that have been cleaned after winter can demonstrate the dramatic difference a wash makes.

Short videos showing the wash process, protective coatings being applied, or undercarriage cleaning systems in action can also capture attention online.

Digital screens or posters at your location can reinforce these messages while customers wait in line or use vacuum stations.

Visual education helps customers see the results they can expect—and builds confidence in your services.

Training for Membership Conversations

Many carwashes offer unlimited wash memberships, and spring is one of the best times to introduce customers to these programs. However, successful membership growth often depends on how staff present the opportunity.

Training employees to explain memberships clearly and confidently can increase participation significantly.

Rather than delivering a sales pitch, staff can simply highlight the convenience and value of unlimited washing. For customers who plan to keep their vehicles clean throughout the spring and summer, memberships often make financial sense.

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Continued from page 12

When team members understand the benefits and communicate them naturally, customers are more likely to sign up.

Creating a Culture of Learning

Staff training shouldn't end after a single meeting or orientation session. The most successful carwash operators create a culture where learning continues throughout the year.

Short refresher sessions, quick team meetings before busy weekends, or occasional product demonstrations can help employees stay engaged and informed.

Encouraging staff to ask questions and share feedback also strengthens the team. Employees who feel invested in their work are more likely to provide excellent service.

This ongoing commitment to training ultimately improves both employee satisfaction and customer experience.

Building Loyalty Through Knowledge

At its core, the carwash business is about trust. Customers are trusting you with their vehicles, and they want to feel confident that your team knows what it's doing.

Well-trained employees and informed customers create a powerful combination. Staff members who understand the services they provide can explain them clearly, while educated customers recognize the value of returning regularly.

Spring offers the perfect moment to build this connection.

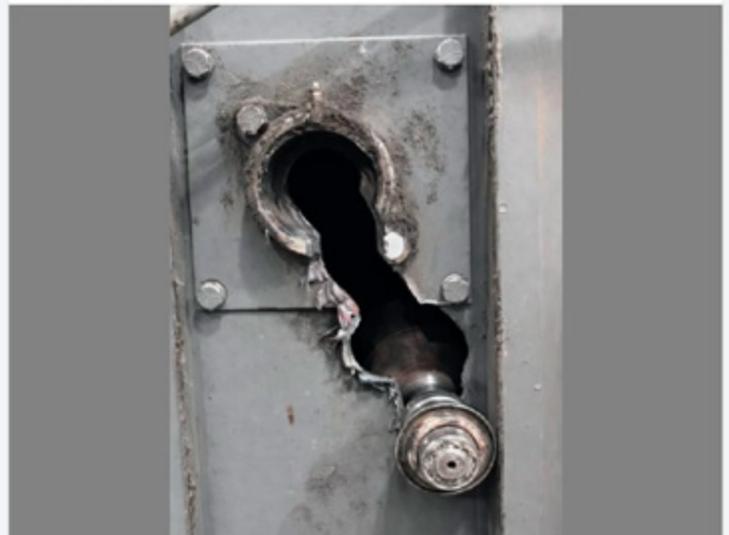
By investing in staff development and customer education, carwash operators can turn seasonal traffic into long-term loyalty—ensuring that the energy of spring carries through the rest of the year.



Welcome to the newest section of our newsletter where the suds get silly, the hoses go haywire, and even the most seasoned carwash pros find themselves in hilarious predicaments. From slippery floors to unexpected spray mishaps, this is your front-row seat to the funniest moments behind the bays.

This screenshot is from a recent Facebook group discussion that caught our attention and sparked some great conversation.

Me: how often do you grease?
Manager: weekly
Me: yea, very weakly



Got a story that had your team laughing (or facepalming) after the rinse? Snap a photo, share your tale, and send it our way—we want to feature your Foam Fumbles in upcoming issues! Email us at: info@heartlandcarwash.org.

Heartland Carwash Association Board of Directors

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