

Watershed Protection Tips



Pool & Spa Maintenance

Pool & Spa Maintenance Best Management Practices for:

- Chlorinated Systems
- Salt Water Systems
- Pool Filter Backwash
- Chemicals

How Does Pool and Spa Maintenance Affect the Watershed?

Improperly disposed of pool water, filter materials and chemicals can enter the watershed and cause damage to plant and animal life. Be aware that whoever drains or maintains a pool or spa is responsible for preventing chemicals from entering the watershed. Most cities levy significant fines for infractions.

Proper Disposal of Chlorinated Swimming Pool/Spa Water

- Maintain your pool properly; it should require draining no more than once every five to ten years if properly maintained.
- Call your city (or county for unincorporated areas) public works department to check for permitting requirements if it becomes necessary to drain your pool.
- For discharge into the sanitary sewer system (if allowed by your city):
 - Pump water into a sewer cleanout or other sewer connection, carefully monitoring flow to avoid flooding.
- For discharge into storm drain system:
 - Reduce the chlorine level to a maximum of 0.1 ppm (parts per million) and the pH reading to 7-8 prior to draining your pool.
 - Ensure your water is clean of algae and mosquitoes before draining.
 - Make certain that the water draining from your pool will not pick up dirt, lawn clippings or other debris as it makes its way to the storm drain.
 - Unmaintained pools with leaves and debris may need specialized filtration. Check with your city (or county for unincorporated areas) public works department.
- Do not drain a spa or pool into a septic system; it will upset the system.

What Is Our Watershed?

Our watershed is the total land area from which stormwater drains into streams, rivers or other bodies of water. The storm drain system is a vast network of gutters, pipes and open channels designed for flood control, which directs untreated stormwater away from our communities. It is both illegal and harmful to allow solid or liquid wastes, including organic materials of any kind, into the storm drain system.

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**The Watershed Should
Only Shed Water**

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Proper Disposal of Salt Water from Swimming Pools or Spas

In many cities it is illegal to discharge salt water from pools or spas into either storm drains or the sanitary sewer. Contact your city (or county for unincorporated areas) public works department for permitting requirements and/or prohibitions.

If saltwater discharge is illegal in your area, this water must be hauled for disposal via truck to a proper ocean discharging disposal facility.

Proper Disposal of Pool Filter Backwash

- Never dispose of filter material in the street, gutter or storm drain system.
- If no harmful chemicals are present, diatomaceous earth (DE) filter waste should be bagged wet and disposed of in the trash.

Adding Chemicals to Your Pool/Spa

- Always read the directions before using any pool chemical.
- Excess acid in a fiberglass pool can result in low pH conditions that can strip copper from heating coils, causing copper pollution.
- Avoid the use of environmentally harmful copper based algaecides. Try hypochlorite shock treatment to prevent and treat algae.
- Pool chemicals can pose serious hazards. The homeowner is responsible for any chemical contamination released into the environment.

For more information on preventing stormwater pollution call:



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