



The City of San Diego

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program

Swimming Pools and Spas: Cleaning, Draining, and Construction

When it rains or when water flows out of yards or over pavement, it flows directly into storm drains, which are designed primarily to discharge rainwater or overflow away from homes and businesses. Many people mistakenly believe this water gets "cleaned" before reaching our waterways. The sewer system and the storm water conveyance system (drains, inlets and catch basins) are separate; they are not connected. Sewer water gets treated, but everything that washes into the storm drain goes untreated directly into our rivers, creeks, bays and ocean. This causes beach closures and postings due to contamination. Releasing pollutants into the storm water conveyance system is a violation of the City Municipal Code (43.0301).

Here are some answers to frequently asked questions and important **Storm Water Best Management Practices (BMPs)** to follow when **Draining a Home Swimming Pool or Spa** :

Can I discharge pool or spa water into the storm drain?

Yes, you can discharge water with no chemicals into the storm drain. The water **MUST**:

1. Be water **only** (cannot carry debris or vegetation with it),
2. Be dechlorinated,
3. Have an acceptable pH of 7-8,
4. Have no algae present (no "green" present),
5. Contain no chemicals to counteract the chlorine,
6. Contain no hydrogen peroxide based products,
7. Be a flow that is controlled so it doesn't cause any erosion problems.

How can I get rid of the chlorine in the water?

Chlorine naturally dissipates and over time the pool water will become dechlorinated. Monitor the pool over a period of 3 to 5 days, testing the chlorine levels. Make sure the water is drained before it turns green which indicates algae growth. Drain pool water gradually onto a landscaped area to prevent erosion problems.

How do I clean pool filters? It's best to clean the pool filter over a lawn, planter box, vegetated hillside or something that absorbs the discharge. Collect materials on filter cloth, then throw the filter cloth away. **Back washing or acid cleaning is not allowed into the storm drains**. All filter backwash fluids must be discharged into the sanitary sewer via a legal sewer connection, and the backwash fluids must have a pH between 5 and 12.5 before discharging into a sewer connection. See manufacturer's specifications for information on how to check pH.

When doing pool construction, all materials must be contained and disposed of properly. These materials include, but are not limited to, plaster, gunite, cement, sediment, and other such construction materials. These materials must not be discharged into the storm drains.

Adopt these behaviors and help Clean-up our beaches and bays.

Think Blue, San Diego. For more information, call (619) 235-1000, or log on to: www.thinkbluesd.org

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&
Act
Blue**

