

Stay cool with Stormwater Friendly Pool-Maintenance!

Storm drains are for stormwater

Storm drain systems are designed to drain excess stormwater from impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, sidewalks, and roofs. Stormwater picks up various pollutants as it travels into gutters and storm drains. These pollutants include oils and grease, fertilizers, trash, road salt, sediment, and other contaminants. In most cases, storm drain systems are designed to direct untreated stormwater into rivers, streams, and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. To do your part in improving stream health within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, it's important to know potential sources of stormwater pollution and how to avoid them. A common source of stormwater pollution that you may not expect is water drained from residential and community pools during summer maintenance.



Pool chemical additives are a negative in stormwater

Chlorine based sanitizers, acid washes, algacides, and other treatments are beneficial in preventing bacteria and algae growth in swimming pools. However, if directed into the storm drain system, these chemicals can harm waterways and kill fish, insects, and other important aquatic life. Remember that anything other than stormwater going into the storm drain system can contribute to water pollution!

Where the water goes...



By cleaning your pool or hot tub on a regular basis and maintaining proper chlorine levels, water filtration, and circulation, you will greatly reduce the circumstances in which you need to drain the water. When the time comes to drain your pool, it's important to direct the water to the appropriate place to prevent pollution to local streams and waterways. Consult the following table when draining your pool or performing regular pool maintenance.



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When you...	Please do the following to prevent pollution
Draining Pool to Storm Drain System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid discharging water from your pool to the storm water system! Discharge to sanitary sewer system whenever possible.* • If draining to the storm drain system is necessary, refrain from chlorinating or adding chemicals to the water for a minimum of five days prior to draining to ensure that the chemicals have dissipated. • Ensure that the pH is between 6.5 and 8.5. • Remove or strain out any algae or debris. • Discharge at a rate slow enough to avoid causing erosion. • Saltwater pools must never be discharged to the storm drain system because of high chloride levels. Saltwater pools must be drained to the sanitary sewer.
Draining Pool to Sanitary Sewer System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similarly to when draining to the storm drain system, refrain from chlorinating or adding chemicals to the water for a minimum of five days prior to draining to lessen amount of treatment that the water will have to receive before leaving the wastewater treatment plant. • Contact your local municipality to ensure that you follow all requirements prior to discharging to the sanitary sewer. Only water that originates from the public water system can be discharged to the sanitary sewer.
Draining to Yard or Landscaped Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not cause flooding conditions on your or adjacent properties (notify neighbors first). • Drain at a rate that will not cause erosion. • Drain at a rate that will allow the water to percolate into the ground and not discharge into the stormwater system, ditch, or creek.
Filter Backwash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never discharge filter backwash to the storm drain system; discharge to a landscaped area or the sanitary sewer. • Dispose of filter material and collected debris in the trash. • Rinse filters over your lawn or landscaped area.
After Pool/Spa Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any wastewater generated from plastering, grouting, acid washing, or wash out water from other maintenance activities must not be discharged to the storm drain system; discharge this water to the sanitary sewer system. • Never pour unused chemicals or cleaning agents into the storm drain system. Recycle or dispose of any leftover chemicals at a Household Hazardous Waste roundup event near you!

**Check with your local publically owned treatment works (POTW).*

Visit the websites below for more information on stormwater friendly pool maintenance:

- [Maryland Swimming Pool Owner Guidance](#)
- [DOE How to Drain Your Pool Properly](#)
- [Best Practices for Swimming Pools and Spas](#)
- [Guidelines for the Release of Swimming Pool Water](#)