



Pollution Prevention Fact Sheet

Swimming Pools - Ponds - Fountains - Spas - Hot Tubs



If you have a swimming pool, pond, fountain, or hot tub, you can be a part of the City of Santa Maria's **Pollution Solution** by properly draining the water when it becomes necessary.

How can I drain my pool or pond without contributing to water pollution?

Disposal of pool water into a storm drain is harmful to the environment because it enters the storm drain system untreated. Pool water may contain chlorine, copper, and filter backwash that can harm waterways and wildlife.

Just follow these simple guidelines...

- ◆ **Do** dechlorinate your pool water prior to discharge to the storm drain by adding a chemical dechlorinator (available from pool supply stores) or by letting the chlorine decrease on its own. If possible, let the water filter over a grassy area on its way to the storm drain.
 - ◆ **Do** discharge pool water to the storm drain only if you know it doesn't contain harmful concentrations of chlorine and copper. A pool maintenance company or local analytical laboratory can help you determine the concentration of chlorine and copper in your pool.
 - ◆ **Do** maintain the proper chemical balance and filtration in your pool. This will minimize the need to drain the pool and prevent unnecessary corrosion of copper pipes and equipment.
 - ◆ **Do** use copper algicides only when necessary, such as when less toxic algae control products are ineffective.
 - ◆ **Do** dispose of wastewater from washing cartridge filters in a dirt area.
 - ◆ **Do** make sure your pool maintenance service follows these important guidelines, too!
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- ◆ **Don't** discharge pool or spa water to the sanitary sewer system. Section 8-12.40 of the City of Santa Maria Municipal Code prohibits drainage and other unpolluted waters – including swimming pool water – from entering the community sewer through either direct or indirect connection.
 - ◆ **Don't** carry the landscape away with the pool water. While filtering the water through vegetation can provide some treatment to the water, too much, too fast can cause soil erosion and plant loss to your yard or your neighbor's yard.
 - ◆ **Don't** discharge swimming pool water containing chlorine at levels higher than 0.01 parts per million (ppm) to the storm drain. Chlorine levels higher than 0.01 ppm are harmful to aquatic organisms.
 - ◆ **Don't** discharge pool water containing harmful levels of copper to the storm drain without appropriate pretreatment. Copper in your pool can come from some algae control products and copper plumbing and equipment, particularly heaters. Your pool maintenance company can advise you on appropriate treatment for your pool water prior to discharge.
 - ◆ **Don't** dispose of your old pool chemicals with the household trash; many are hazardous waste when discarded. Rather, bring your old pool chemicals to the City of Santa Maria Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center, open on Wednesday mornings and Saturdays.

For assistance, call the Utilities Department Regulatory Compliance staff at 805-925-0951, ext. 7270.

To report illegal dumping, call the Storm Water Hotline, 805-925-0951, ext. 7777.