



Residential Swimming Pool Discharges

Guidelines for Residential Pool Owners

Be a Good Swimming Pool Neighbor

Under certain conditions, draining swimming pools can cause fish kills and other harmful environmental impacts.

Be Astute, Don't Pollute

Pool water must be essentially free of chlorine (<0.1 ppm total chlorine), algacides and other potential pollutants prior to discharge. As a general rule, a 10-day holding time (after the last chemical treatment) is usually adequate to dissipate chlorine prior to discharge.

Bubbling, cascading or other forms of aeration will help to remove chlorine from the water. The pH of the pool water must be within a normal range (6 to 9). When in doubt, test your pool water to ensure that it is safe to release or discharge. Pool discharges must be done slowly (± 2 gpm or less) to prevent soil erosion, flooding or damage to adjacent properties and to allow complete percolation into the ground within the property boundaries.

Filter system backwash may be directed to either sanitary sewers or to the ground so that it will not run off of the site. To keep filter system backwash from running off-site, the backwash will generally have to be directed to a dry well or infiltration gallery.

Permit Requirements

Municipal, commercial and institutional pool owners should contact their NYSDEC Regional Office for specific guidance about swimming pool discharges. Under most conditions (when proper environmental safeguards are carefully followed) NYSDEC generally will not require SPDES permits for careful draining of pool water or filter system backwash from residential pools to the ground, if the discharge does not run off of the site.

New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation

George E. Pataki, Governor Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner

The discharge of pool water or filter system backwash directly or indirectly into a stream, pond, lake or wetland is prohibited except when done in accordance with a valid SPDES permit. In some areas of the state (e.g., Lake George Basin and Skaneateles Lake Basin) discharge of filter system backwash to a stream, pond, lake or wetland is prohibited without exception.

Discharges of pool water into sewers (sanitary or combined) generally require the express prior approval of the local sewer authority. Discharges into storm sewers require the prior approval of the local regulatory authority and may also require a SPDES permit.

For more information about responsible discharges of water from swimming pools and any other water permit requirements, contact the Division of Water at your NYS-DEC Regional Office.

NYSDEC Region Office Phone Numbers:

Region 1	(631) - 444-0405 Stony Brook
Region 2	(718) - 482-4900 Long Island City
Region 3	(845) - 256-3019 New Paltz (914) - 332-1835 Tarrytown
Region 4	(518) - 357-2045 Schenectady
Region 5	(518) - 897-1241 Raybrook (518) - 623-1200 Warrensburg
Region 6	(315) - 785-2513 Watertown (315) - 793-2554 Utica
Region 7	(315) - 426-7500 Syracuse
Region 8	(585) - 226-5450 Avon
Region 9	(716) - 851-7070 Buffalo

HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Pollution Prevention Unit
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-8010
1-800-462-6553

NYSDEC website: www.dec.state.ny.us

PPU website: www.dec.state.ny.us/website/ppu