

Pools, Fountains & Spas...

How to Prevent Water & Storm Sewer Pollution

Best Management Practices For:
Homeowners
Condominium & Apartment Complexes
Hotels, Motels & Inns
Schools
Fitness Clubs

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Stormwater Pollution

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas, bare soil, and sloped lawns. As it flows, stormwater runoff collects and transports soil, animal waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and grease, debris and other potential pollutants.

What is the Problem?

Rain and snowmelt wash pollutants from streets, construction sites, and land into storm sewers and ditches. Eventually, the storm sewers and ditches empty the polluted stormwater directly into streams and rivers with no treatment. This is known as stormwater pollution. Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen can cause the overgrowth of algae resulting in oxygen depletion in waterways. Toxic substances from motor vehicles and careless application of pesticides and fertilizers threaten water quality and can kill fish and other aquatic life. Bacteria from animal wastes and improper connections to storm sewer systems can make lakes and waterways unsafe for wading, swimming and fish consumption. Eroded soil is a pollutant as well. It clouds the waterway and interferes with the habitat of fish and plant life. Fortunately, stormwater pollution can be prevented or minimized by implementing Best Management Practices which are procedures or activities that reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater.

How to Prevent Pollution from Pools, Spas & Fountains

Although we enjoy the fun and relaxing times in them, the water used in swimming pools, spas and fountains can cause problems for our creeks and lakes if not disposed of properly. Draining your pool, spa or fountain improperly can result in chlorine, suspended solids and nutrients entering surface water (streams and lakes).

Best Management Practices

Best Management Practices or BMPs are procedures that help to prevent pollutants like chlorine and sediment from entering storm drains.

Draining Pools, Spas and Fountains:

Never discharge pool, spa, or fountain to a street or storm drain; discharge to a sanitary sewer cleanout.

If possible, when emptying a pool, spa or fountain, let chlorine dissipate for a few days and then recycle/reuse water by draining it gradually onto a landscaped area.

Drain pools, spas and fountains slowly, using a low volume pump or siphon.

Make sure water used to acid wash pool, spa or fountain is neutralized prior to discharge. Soda ash can be used to keep the pH between 6.0 and 7.0 before discharging.

Do not use copper-based algaecides. Control algae with alternatives such as sodium bromide.

Filter Cleaning:

Never clean a filter in the street or near a storm drain. Rinse cartridge and diatomaceous earth filters onto a dirt area and spade filter residue into soil. Dispose of spent diatomaceous earth in the garbage.

If there is no suitable lawn area; call your local wastewater treatment plant for instructions on discharging filter backwash or rinse water to the sanitary sewer.

Created and distributed as part of our stormwater management program to protect our waterways and enhance our quality of life. Our goal is to identify existing resources and develop programs to reduce the negative impacts of stormwater pollution. This is part of the implementation of a stormwater management program that complies with New York State's Stormwater regulations. -2/2009