

DRAINING RESIDENTIAL SWIMMING POOLS

Seasonal information targeting storm water runoff and water quality issues from the Phase II Storm water Management Communication Committee.

Marketing Season: April and September

Requirement for Draining Residential Swimming Pools

This article addresses the requirements associated with residents draining their swimming pools, and for proper disposal of wastewater from their filter backwashing. These requirements apply to discharges that occur within incorporated and unincorporated St. Louis County.

FILTER BACKWASH WATER REQUIREMENTS

- Backwashing is defined as the rinsing and/or cleaning of cartridge or sand filters. Filter backwashing produces water that contains pollutants such as chlorine and sediment.
- Filter backwash should be discharged to the sanitary sewer system or it may be discharged onto the pool owner's property as long as it can be absorbed into the ground.
- Filter backwash water may not be discharged offsite to streets or the storm system.
- Do not allow filter backwash water to flow onto a neighboring property or street.

REQUIREMENTS FOR DRAINING SWIMMING POOLS

Draining swimming pools usually involves a large volume of water with chlorine levels that can impact aquatic life in local streams. Acceptable procedures for emptying a pool are as follows:

- A pool may be emptied by discharging to the storm water system if the chlorine content is ≤ 1 part per million and free of other chemicals;
- Chlorine levels can be dissipated to acceptable levels in several days by no longer adding chlorine to the pool;
- The pH level of the water must be tested prior to discharge and must fall within a range of 5.5 – 11.5;
- The water must not be cloudy or discolored and must be free of algae and contaminants; water may be drained on the owner's property – provided it goes to a drainage channel, or along the curb line gutter of a paved street;
- Water must be monitored to ensure that it does not cause any erosion of the drainage channels. Discharges to the sewer must be controlled at a rate that will not surcharge the lines in that area.
- Discharges of pool water containing pollutants such as chlorine, sediment, or organic debris must be drained to the sanitary sewers.

Editors Note: Some cities may have adopted ordinances or requirements not included herein.

Rev 2, 5/10