

# DRAINING POOLS AND SPAS



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Be aware of the impacts that swimming pool and spa water can have on streams and lakes!

## Did you know...

- Draining swimming pools and spas to storm drains can pollute streams and lakes with copper, chlorine, and other chemicals.
- Storm drains flow directly into our streams and lakes without treatment.
- Chlorine and copper are toxic to aquatic life, even at low levels.
- Bromine will have the same effect in our waters as chlorine.
- All types of chemicals used in pool and spa maintenance must be neutralized before being released into the environment.

**Chemicals used in pools and spas can be toxic when released into nearby streams and lakes.**

### Chlorine Pools

Chlorine is toxic to fish and other aquatic life, even at very low levels.

Chlorine burns the gills and fins of fish, destroys sensory organs, interferes with the ability of fish to find food, and causes internal organ damage.

*Always follow recommended procedures when draining your swimming pool - See Reverse Side.*

### Baquacil Pools

Baquacil is less commonly used for pool treatment. Baquacil may be discharged to the stormwater under the Iowa DNR's general NPDES permit No. 7. It is recommended that the standard pool guidelines be followed for these pools whenever possible.

### Bromine Pools

The impact of bromine on fish and other aquatic life is very similar to chlorine. Pool owners should follow the same guidelines as chlorine pools.



### Copper Algaecide

Copper based algaecides are less commonly used pool chemicals. Copper may also be found in pipes. It is a pollutant that directly threatens aquatic life.

Pool and spa owners are encouraged to consider alternatives to copper-based algaecides, such as sodium bromide.

### Salt Water Pools

Salt water pools generate the chemical byproduct *bromoform*.

Bromoform is a persistent organic pollutant that accumulates in the environment and is very harmful to aquatic life.

***Never drain salt water pools to a street, gutter or storm drain!***

### Be Responsible!

Each owner is responsible for properly handling pool water. Pool testing kits should be used to monitor water conditions. Choose environmentally friendly products if available.



# Draining Pools and Spas

## Chlorine/Bromine Pools and Spas

### Recommended Procedures:

- Contact the City of Urbandale Engineering & Public Works Department at 515-278-3950 or [stormwater@urbandale.org](mailto:stormwater@urbandale.org) to determine if you can discharge to the sanitary sewer system.
- If unable to drain to the sanitary sewer, test the pool water to ensure that the chlorine or bromine level is <1 ppm (a non-detect) and pH is between 6.5 and 8.5.
- When the pool water meets the above tests, it can be drained slowly over the ground. Water should drain through at least 15 feet of a flat, grassy area to allow remaining chemicals to dissipate. Keep the flow of water low (about 12 gallons per minute) to prevent erosion.
- Chlorine levels can be reduced by at least three days of sunlight.
- Manage pH and water hardness to minimize copper corrosion in pipes that can stain your pool and end up in our streams.
- Filter backwash water cannot be discharged to the stormwater system without an individual wastewater permit.
- Copper algaecide often collects in the pool filter. Rinse cartridge filters or clean diatomaceous sand filters onto a dirt area and spade the residue into the soil.



## Salt Water Swimming Pools and Spas

### Recommended Procedures:

- Don't drain to street, gutter or storm drain!
- Discharge water to sanitary sewer system per Urbandale Sanitary Sewer District guidelines.
- If unable to drain to the sanitary sewer, an individual wastewater permit is required.
- Contact the City of Urbandale Engineering & Public Works Department at 515-278-3950 or [stormwater@urbandale.org](mailto:stormwater@urbandale.org)

### IMPORTANT NOTE!

As a condition of Urbandale's federal stormwater permit, the City has adopted and will enforce an ILLICIT DISCHARGE TO STORM SEWER SYSTEM ordinance.

Discharging chemically treated pool and spa water to a storm sewer without following water quality recommendations is considered an illicit discharge, and is regulated under the stormwater permit.

Discharging saltwater in any condition from a pool or spa to a storm sewer is considered an illicit discharge, and is regulated under the stormwater permit.



*Please do your part to protect Iowa's streams and lakes!*

