

A-33 Swimming Pool and Spa Cleaning and Maintenance

These BMPs apply to pools, spas, hot tubs, and fountains that use chemicals and/or that are heated.

Best Management Practices are required by King County Code 9.12. If the BMPs included here are not enough to prevent contamination of stormwater, you will be required to take additional measures.

Required Operational BMPs:

- Clean the pool, spa, hot tub, or fountain regularly, maintain proper chlorine levels and maintain water filtration and circulation. Doing so will limit the need to drain the facility.
- Manage pH and water hardness to reduce copper pipe corrosion that can stain the facility and pollute receiving waters.
- Before using copper algaecides, try less toxic alternatives. Only use copper algaecides if the others alternative do not work. Ask a pool/spa/hot tub/fountain maintenance service or store for help resolving persistent algae problems without using copper algaecides.
- Develop and regularly update a facility maintenance plan that follows all discharge requirements.
- Dispose of unwanted chemicals properly. Many of them are hazardous wastes when discarded.
- Store pool chemicals under cover and in enclosed containers.

Required Water Disposal BMPs:

All pools and spas regulated by the Seattle–King County Department of Public Health must be connected to the sanitary sewer for draining, pool wash water and filter backwash. If the pool or spa does not have a permanent drain connection, then water must be pumped or drained to the sanitary sewer or meet the following BMPs.

There are several options for discharging pool and spa water: drain to the sanitary sewer, have it hauled offsite for disposal at an approved location, infiltrate to the ground, or drain to the stormwater drainage system under the conditions listed below.

- When a sanitary sewer is not available for discharge, pool and spa water may be discharged to the ground to infiltrate or to the stormwater drainage system if all of the following conditions are met:
 - » No copper–based algaecides were used;
 - » The water must be tested to determine chlorine levels and pH;
 - » The water is dechlorinated to 0.10 ppm Chlorine or less, using neutralizing chemicals or by letting the pool or spa “sit” long enough to reduce the chlorine level to the allowable limit. The pool or spa must not be used during this period;
 - » The pH is neutral (6–8);
 - » Free of any coloration, dirt, suds, or algae.
 - » Free of any filter media.
 - » Free of acid cleaning wastes.
 - » Released at a rate that does not cause erosion either onsite or in the drainage system; and
 - » At ambient temperature.

- Where there is no sanitary sewer and it is not possible to discharge the pool or spa water to the ground, a professional pool–draining service must be hired to collect all water for off–site disposal at an approved location.
- Diatomaceous earth (commonly used as a filtering agent) and water from back flushing filter systems cannot be discharged to surface waters, storm drainage systems, septic systems, or the ground. Dispose of diatomaceous earth filter material as solid waste.
- Do not discharge pool or spa water to a septic system, as it is prohibited and may cause the system to fail.
- The discharge of pool and spa filter backwash or cleaning water to the ground, surface waters or the storm drainage system is not allowed.

For more information or assistance contact the King County Stormwater Services at 206–477–4811 and visit kingcounty.gov/stormwater.