

# Residential Swimming Pool Discharge Guidance

## City of Brookland

### How to drain or backwash your pool and spa WHILE PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Pool owners may be tempted to discharge chlorinated or saline pool water into the street and gutter that leads to a storm drain. However, the purpose of the storm drain system is to protect against flooding and water damage by quickly removing rainwater from our streets. This water gets no treatment and may ultimately drain into creeks, lakes, and rivers. The City of Brookland has permits and ordinance to reduce the pollutants into our storm drains and is why the disposal of chlorinated or saline swimming pool and spa water to the storm water drain systems is prohibited. Remember to dispose of unwanted pool chemicals as household hazardous waste.

The City of Brookland's storm water drains into the Lower St. Francis River Watershed.

In Arkansas, the disposal of swimming pool water is regulated to protect the environment and public health. Here are some key points.

1. **Prohibited Dumping:** It is unlawful to dispose of swimming pool and spa water in way that could harm public or private property, or any body of water such as creeks, rivers, lakes, or ponds.
2. **Permitted Disposal:** Pool and spa water should be disposed of through the sanitary sewer system, if possible. This helps ensure that the water is treated properly before being released into the environment.
3. **Chemicals Considerations:** Before discharging pool or spa water, it's important to ensure that the water is free of harmful chemicals. This typically involves dechlorinating the water and ensuring that pH levels are neutral.
4. **Local Regulations:** Always check with local authorities or the Arkansas Department of Health for guidelines and permits that may be required for disposing of pool and spa water.

**NO!**

### **STREET OR GUTTER**

- Do not discharge chlorinated or saline pool or spa water into the street or gutter because this water drains into the creeks, lakes, ponds, and rivers.
- Remember to dispose of unwanted pool and spa chemicals as household hazardous waste.

## **NO!**

### **SANITARY SEWER**

- Never drain pool or spa water into a septic tank system.
- Never drain pool or spa water to the sanitary sewer until the water has been de-chlorinated and pH adjusted.
- Always contact the City of Brookland with the amount of gallons of water you will be dumping into the sanitary sewer.

## **YES!**

### **YOUR YARD**

- Drain you pool or spa water to your vegetated landscape, lawn or rocky areas on your property that allow the water to percolate into the ground.
- Salt or saline pool or spa water contains higher concentrations of salts that can be more damaging to plants and soils. Consider locations or discharge as some plants are more salt-tolerant than others.
- Remember to move the drain hose frequently.
- Be sure the pool or spa water does not flow onto your neighbor's property or collect in any areas that may attract mosquitoes.
- Where it is not possible to discharge the pool or spa water to the ground without impacting your neighbor's property, a professional pool-draining service must be hired to collect all water for off-site disposal at an approved location.

# **Guidelines for DE-Chlorinating Swimming Pools and Spas And Discharging Filter Backwash**

## **To de-chlorinate residential swimming pools, hot tub, spa or fountain water:**

1. Once the chlorination system has been shut off or chlorine has stopped being added to the water, keep the water in the pool/spa/fountain for 7-10 days to allow the chlorine to naturally evaporate in the sunlight.

De-chlorination additives can also be purchased at your pool supply store and can be used to speed up the de-chlorination process.

2. Use a test kit to measure the chlorine level and pH in the water. Most pool owners use a pH and chlorine test kit to maintain the quality of the pool water, but if you do not have one, you can purchase an expensive one at the local pool supply store.

**The water should not show any detectable levels of chlorine, and the pH should be neutral between 6.5 and 8.5.** You may need to let the water sit longer to achieve the chlorine and pH levels required before discharging the water.

3. After water is de-chlorinated, you may discharge the water under the following conditions:
  - Avoid creating conditions that cause street or property flooding or ponding water
  - Avoid discharging when it is raining, in order to prevent the storm drainage system from becoming overloaded.

**Remember, only DE-CHLORINATED swimming pool/hot tub/spa/fountain water is allowed to be discharged into the environment.**

## **To discharge residential swimming pool filter backwash:**

1. Water from backwashing pool filters **shall not** be discharged to the street or storm drainage system.
2. Backwash must be contained on the property. Use it to water grass or any area on your property that will allow water to percolate into the ground.
3. Hire a contractor to pump the pool water into a truck to be hauled offsite. Check the internet for septic disposal companies for this service.

## **Additional Precautions:**

**Pool water may contain copper** from chemicals used in the pool to prevent the growth of algae. Since copper can be harmful to fish and wildlife, your local pool supply store can help you determine the best chemicals to add to the pool to neutralize or remove metals from the water before discharging.

**Properly store pool and spa chemicals** to prevent leaks and spills. Store them in an area that is properly covered to avoid exposure to rain or vandalism.

**Thank you for your cooperation in keeping the City's streams,  
creeks, ponds, lakes, and rivers clean and healthy!**