



# DEC

## Swimming Pool Discharges (General Guidelines)

### Be a Good Swimming Pool Neighbor!

Under certain conditions, draining swimming pools can cause fish kills and other harmful environmental impacts.

Failure to follow appropriate procedures and to implement appropriate testing and other safeguards may constitute discharge of pollutants without a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit, could result in fish kills and other types of damage, and may cause the discharger to be subject to significant fines and to other civil and criminal liabilities

Under most conditions (when proper environmental safeguards are carefully followed) New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) will not require SPDES Permits for draining of swimming pools to the ground.

Discharging pool water directly to or within 250 ft. of a stream, pond, lake or wetland may be prohibited or require a SPDES permit.

### Be Astute and Don't Pollute!

- As a general rule, a 10 day holding time (after the last chemical treatment) is usually adequate to dissipate chlorine prior to discharge.
- Pool water should be essentially free of chlorine ( $\leq 0.1$  ppm total chlorine), algaecides, and other potential pollutants prior to discharge.

Pollution Prevention Unit  
NYS DEC, 625 Broadway, 12<sup>th</sup> floor  
Albany, NY 12233-8010

- Bubbling, cascading or other forms of aeration will help to remove chlorine from the water.
- pH should be within a normal range (6 to 9). pH adjustment chemicals, instructions and test kits are available at any pool supply store.
- Pool discharges should be done slowly to prevent soil erosion, flooding, or damage to adjacent properties (the recommended maximum discharge rate is 25 gal/min or less).
- Filter system backwash should be handled and disposed of in an environmentally responsible manner.
- When in doubt, test your pool water to ensure that it is safe prior to release or discharge.

### Keep Our Water Safe and Clean!

Remember, it is up to each one of us to do our part to protect the environment, be a good neighbor, and to comply with the law.

For additional information regarding the responsible discharge of water from swimming pools and any other water permit requirements, contact the Division of Water at your NYSDEC Regional Office.

NYSDEC Regional Office Phone Numbers:

Region 1 (631) 444-0420	Region 2 (718)482-6516
Region 3 (914) 332-1835	Region 4 (518) 367-2380
Region 5 (518) 623-3671	Region 6 (315) 793-2554
Region 7 (315) 426-7500	Region 8 (585) 226-5445
Region 9 (716) 851-7190	

You can also contact the Pollution Prevention Unit (PPU) at 1-800-462-6553.

Or contact our websites:

NYSDEC website: [www.dec.state.ny.us/](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/)

PPU website: [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/ppu](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/ppu)

### Help Protect the Environment!

**NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

George E. Pataki, Governor

Denise M. Sheehan, Commissioner