



Swimming Pool Discharges

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Why does pool water need to be discharged?

Swimming pools require regular maintenance to keep them safe and clean. This includes:

- Draining water for repairs or major maintenance
- Releasing overflow during or after heavy rain
- Cleaning filters (backwashing)

These activities generate wastewater that must be disposed of properly, which can harm local water resources, damage infrastructure and affect neighboring properties.

2. Who regulates pool discharges?

Pool discharges are regulated through:

- Federal Clean Water Act (CFR 122.26)
- Florida Administrative Code (62-4, 62-600, 62-604, 62-620, 62-621, 62-624 & 62-625)
- Local city ordinance (21-601, 21-602, 21-346, Sewer Use Manual)

3. Where can I (or cannot I) discharge my pool water?

It depends on the type of discharge – the following table should be used as a guide understanding that each scenario and circumstance may differ.

Discharge Type	Allowable Disposal Location(s)	Prohibited Discharge Location	Special Discharge Considerations
Filter Backwash	*Land Surface, Wastewater Collection System	Stormwater Management System	Pretreatment May Be Required
Overflow	*Land Surface, Stormwater Management System	Wastewater Collection System	Dechlorinated Only



Drainage (Partial/Full)	*Land Surface, Stormwater Management System	Wastewater Collection System	Dechlorinated Only
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*Discharge to the land surface must be done with care. Excessive volumes of water may negatively impact neighbors. Slow, controlled and supervised releases are best practices for discharges to the land surface.

4. How do I dechlorinate my pool water?

Discharges of chlorinated pool water are generally prohibited. To ensure chlorine residuals are at an acceptable level (<0.01 mg/L), test strips are a cheap and effective tool to employ prior to discharge. You should plan ahead as the dechlorination process may take a few days.

- Natural Dechlorination: Sunlight will reduce chlorine levels if fresh chlorine isn't added. Remove any chlorine-based chemicals from the pool and filtration system and test daily.
- Chemical Dechlorination: If natural dechlorination isn't practical, or if you're pressed for time, consider using a chlorine-countering chemical. There are many chemical dechlorinating agents available at pool stores or other retailers. One popular dechlorinator is sodium thiosulphate. Directions should be followed and water tested prior to discharge.

It should be noted that dechlorination due to excessive rainfall may not be practical. In such cases, dilution associated with the rainfall may be the only possible mitigation prior to discharge.

5. What is pretreatment?

Wastewater treatment plants are designed primarily to treat typical domestic sewage. Certain discharges, including pool filter backwash, can contain substances that impact the wastewater collection system or interfere with the treatment process. Pretreatment helps to mitigate these problems at the source and can involve settling, filtration and/or flow control prior to discharge into the collection system. If you wish to utilize the City's wastewater system for the disposal of filter backwash water, please contact Wastewater Engineering for more information.

Contact Information

General Questions:

Stormwater Management: 850-891-6860

Wastewater Engineering: 850-891-6172

Report Discharge Violations:

Environmental Services: 850-891-4968