

# Be the Solution to Stormwater Pollution!

## Protect Our Creeks

Your swimming pool, spa, or fountain maintenance practices can make a significant difference in the water quality of our creeks, ocean, and bay.

Many chemicals used in pool maintenance (e.g. chlorine, bromine, copper, silver) are extremely toxic to aquatic life. For example, the State Department of Fish and Game

has determined that levels of chlorine in water higher than 0.01 parts per million (ppm) are dangerous to the environment. The typical chlorine level maintained in a pool is 2-4 ppm; that is 200-400 times the harmful level.

And, diatomaceous earth (DE), cellulose fiber, and sand filter back wash can fill in creek gravel preventing oxygen from reaching fish eggs and young fish. DE and cellulose fiber's fine particles will also cloud creek water and clog fish gills.

By doing a few simple things you can protect the fish and critters that live in our creeks **and** comply with Local, State, and Federal regulations. Also remember that homeowners are responsible for the actions of their contractors. Be sure you know how your contractor will be disposing of the pool, spa, or fountain water and the filter cleaning rinsewater and backwash.

## Only Rain Down the Drain

In Marin County, all storm drains (the drains in streets) flow directly to creeks or other waterways with **no** treatment!



In response to federal and state requirements, the municipalities in Marin have joined to form the: **Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP)**

### Stormwater Coordinators in Marin

Belvedere.....	435-3838
Corte Madera.....	927-5069
County Uninc. ....	473-3748
Fairfax.....	458-2339
Larkspur.....	927-5017
Mill Valley.....	388-4033 ext. 118
Novato.....	899-8286
Ross.....	453-8287 ext. 163
San Anselmo.....	258-4616
San Rafael.....	485-3342
Sausalito.....	289-4192
Tiburon.....	435-7354

## Wastewater and Sanitary Districts

Almonte Sanitary District .....	388-8775
Bolinas Co, Public Utility District .....	868-1224
Central Marin Sanitation Agency.....	459-1455
City of Belvedere .....	435-3838
City of Mill Valley Public Works .....	388-4033
City of Sausalito .....	332-0240
County Sewer Maintenance Dist ....	473-6524
Murray Park-Kentfield, San Quentin Village	
Homestead Sanitary District #1 .....	388-4796
Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary Dist.....	472-1734
Lucas Valley, Marinwood, Northgate, Portola Gardens, San Rafael Meadows, Santa Venetia, Terra Linda	
Novato Sanitary District .....	892-1694
Bahia, Bel Marin Keys, Hamilton, Ignacio, Novato	
North Marin Water District .....	897-4133
Richardson Bay Sanitary District ....	388-1345
Del Mar Estates, Hawthorn Terrace, Strawberry	
Sanitary District #1 .....	461-1122
Fairfax, Greenbrae, Kentfield, Kent Woodlands, Larkspur, Ross, San Anselmo, Sleepy Hollow	
Sanitary District #2 .....	927-5057
Corte Madera	
Sanitary District # 5 .....	435-1501
Tiburon	
San Rafael Sanitary District.....	454-4001
Sausalito-Marín City Sanitary Dist ...	332-0244
Seafirth .....	454-8084
Sewerage Agency of So Marin.....	388-2402
Tamalpais Com. Services Dist. ....	388-6393
Kay Park, Tam Valley, Tam Woods	

# Discharging water from Swimming Pools, Spas, and Fountains

## Pollution Prevention Practices for Marin County Residents



Photo by Kathleen Edson

Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program  
[www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org)

To learn more about how you can help reduce stormwater pollution visit [www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org)

Design by the Napa County Resource Conservation District

# Best Management Practices

Follow the maintenance practices listed below to help keep pollutants out of our waterways, protect water in our creeks and comply with local, state, and federal laws.

**Note:** For information on commercial swimming pool facilities, contact the Marin County Department of Environmental Health Services at 415-473-6907.

## Disposing of Swimming Pool, Spa, or Fountain Water

- Saltwater pools cannot be discharged to a sanitary sewer system or a storm drain!
- The preferred method is to discharge pool, spa, or fountain water (other than salt water) onto land surfaces provided the water is dechlorinated/debrominated, the pH is between 6.5 and 8.5, **and** the land area is sufficient to prevent erosion and runoff into a ditch, creek, or other stormwater conveyance.
- If landscaping is not a viable option, the next best choice is to discharge pool, spa, or fountain water to the sanitary system. Contact your local sanitary sewer agency to make sure the discharge will not create a problem in the sewer system or wastewater treatment plant downstream of your property.

As a **last resort**, discharge to a storm drain only if:

- no other disposal methods (e.g. sanitary sewer, landscaping) are possible.
- the pool, spa, or fountain water is completely dechlorinated/debrominated.
- concentrations of copper and silver are not harmful to fish or other aquatic life.
- the pH is between 6.5 and 8.5.
- the water is free of any unusual coloration, dirt, suds, or algae.
- there is no discharge of filter media.
- there is no discharge of acid cleaning wastes.
- the water is at ambient temperature. (Heated water should be allowed to cool.)

***It is illegal to discharge water from pools, spas and fountains - including filter rinsewater and backwash - to streets, storm drains or creeks!***

## Disposing of Filter Rinsewater and Backwash

- Rinse cartridge filters onto a dirt area and spade the filter residue into the soil.
- Backwash sand and diatomaceous earth filters onto a dirt or rock area.
- Keep backwash discharges out of the street and storm drain. Temporary wash areas must be adequate to contain all washwaters. The temporary wash area is inadequate if washwater reaches creeks, gutters, or storm drains.
- If you do not have a suitable dirt area, contact your wastewater treatment authority listed on the back of this brochure for instructions on discharging to the sanitary sewer. Pretreatment may be required to remove the diatomaceous earth from the backwash water and prevent blockages to your sewer line.

## General Maintenance Tips

- Clean your pool, fountain, or spa regularly, maintain proper chlorine levels, water filtration and circulation. If you do so, you will not have to drain your pool so often.
- Manage pH and water hardness to reduce copper pipe corrosion that can stain your pool and end up in our creeks.
- Avoid using copper algaecides. Ask your pool maintenance service or store for help resolving persistent algae problems without using copper algaecides.
- Make sure your pool maintenance service follows all discharge requirements.
- Dispose of unwanted pool chemicals properly. Many are hazardous wastes when discarded. Household hazardous wastes may be legally disposed of at a Hazardous Waste Collection Facility for free. In Novato, call 892-7344. Other areas of Marin call 485-6806.  
  
Commercial operations, including maintenance companies, may dispose of hazardous pool chemicals for a fee through the Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program. For an appointment, call the Hazardous Waste Collection Facility at 892-6395 (Novato only) or 485-5648 (for other areas of Marin).



Kathleen Edson