
SWIMMING POOLS, HOT TUBS AND SPAS

Swimming pools, hot tubs and spas must be cleaned and maintained for health reasons. This involves the use of chemicals, many of which may be toxic to the environment. When the water from swimming pools, hot tubs, spas or the backwash water from the filtering systems is discharged to streets, lanes, storm drains or perimeter drains, it enters the storm sewer system. Storm sewers are connected to the nearest body of water where contaminants may be toxic to fish and the environment.

Best Management Practices

Many of the chemicals used to treat, clean and maintain swimming pools are toxic, even the residual chlorine in swimming pools, hot tubs and spas can kill fish. To prevent damage to the environment from your swimming pool, hot tub or spa the following are to be practised:

- Wastes from backwashing filtering systems, wash water containing cleaning solutions and water drained from swimming pools, hot tubs and spas are to be discharged to the sanitary sewer system.
- Backwash wastes and water from small backyard pools, hot tubs and spas can be discharged to the ground in areas where there are NO storm drains, yard drains, building perimeter drains, ditches or creeks. Do not discharge water to the ground if the water will affect neighbouring properties.
- Pool chemicals should be stored in a secure area where spills will be contained and will not enter the storm sewer system.
- To dispose of unused chemicals contact the B.C. Recycling Hotline at www.rcbc.ca or 604-732-9253.

Spills

Spills of toxic and hazardous solutions and chemicals used in swimming pools, hot tubs and spas must be cleaned up immediately. Spills should be contained and curbed to prevent the spills from entering the storm sewer system.

Some of the chemicals used are corrosive, toxic or have other hazardous properties. Always read the labels and follow the instructions. Do not attempt to clean up spills of concentrated chemicals or chemicals with toxic fumes. Call the Fire Department immediately at 9-1-1.

Enforcement

Section 3.2(1) of the Sewer and Watercourse By-law No. 8093 states that, “No person shall cause or permit contaminated water or wastewater to be discharged to a storm sewer.” Violators are subject to fines of up to \$10,000 per offence.

For further information contact the City of Vancouver’s Environmental Protection Branch at 3-1-1, outside Vancouver at 604-873-7000 or at environmentalprotection@vancouver.ca.

(Original signed by)

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