



County of Sonoma Department of Health Services

Environmental Health

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www.sonoma-county.org/eh



Swimming Pools Impacted by Smoke and Ash

The following guidelines are recommended for the maintenance of pools impacted by smoke and ash contamination or fire damage. Do not allow use of the pool until the following steps have been completed.

1. Clean skimmer baskets of debris and skim water surface of pool with pool net to remove floating debris.
2. Brush sides and bottom of pool to loosen contaminants. Vacuum pool.
3. Backwash and clean filter, discharging waste to municipal sanitary sewer only: Connected to a septic tank system, discharge the backwash to a pervious surface (gravel, lawn, open space) to allow for infiltration without erosion. Backwash to the storm drain system (alleys, driveways, streets, storm drains) and creeks is prohibited by law.
4. Check pH and adjust to between 7.2 and 7.8.
5. Check free chlorine level and adjust to minimum of 2.0 ppm.
6. Ensure the recirculation system is operating properly by checking filter pressure and/or flow meter.
7. Reopen pool to bathers when pH levels are 7.2 to 7.8 and free chlorine is at least 2.0 ppm and not more than 10 ppm.
8. Due to the amount of smoke and ash in the air, these steps may need to be repeated after cleaning the filters.
9. Alternatively, a swimming pool service company may be contracted to clean the pool. Check for their business license and experience in servicing pools. Pool service operators likewise are prohibited from discharging backwash to the storm drain system.

Deck Cleaning: Clean the pool deck and dispose of the debris with the rest of the solid waste. Don't hose down the deck to storm drains. You may spray lightly first to minimize dust and ashes from becoming airborne, then use a stiff brush or broom to sweep up and put in trash. A mop and bucket could also be used for cleanup.

Draining Pools: Draining of pools is not recommended. If you must drain the pool, contact the stormwater program of your local jurisdiction for guidance. In general, pool water must be de-chlorinated to 0.0 ppm chlorine and have a pH between 7.2 and 7.8 if it is drained.

Mosquito Breeding: Pools with standing water could breed mosquitoes. Please call Marin and Sonoma County Vector Control at 800-231-3236 to have staff come and stock the pool with mosquito-eating fish until the power and pool recirculation system are restored.

Damaged Pool, Enclosure or Recirculation System: Pools that have had damage to the recirculation system, the pool enclosure or the pool shell must contact Plan Review of the Department of Environmental Health at 707-565-6565 for evaluation.