



Stormwater Outreach for Swimming Pool and Hot Tub Owners

If you live or own a home in the City of Walla Walla that has a swimming pool or spa, wastewater from swimming pools and spas may not be piped or allowed to flow into city streets where it will run down the gutter to storm drains or into surface waters such as creeks. This includes wastewater from backwashing the filter or draining the pool or spa, except as noted below.

The Walla Walla River and its tributaries are designated as water quality limited (degraded) by the State of Washington and we need your cooperation to improve the water quality of our rivers and creeks. Some of our local creeks exceed water quality standards for fecal coliform, pesticides, temperature, and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). High levels of fecal coliform, which come from pet waste and failed septic systems, make fish, animals, and people sick and can make swimming unsafe. Pesticides and PCBs can be toxic to aquatic life and may cause cancer. Also, warmer water contains less oxygen that aquatic organisms need to survive.

[Chapter 13.15 of the Walla Walla Municipal Code](#) prohibits the discharge of any material other than clean, uncontaminated stormwater into the City storm drain system, underground injection control wells (i.e., drywells), and/or surface and ground waters such as Mill Creek or any of the many other creeks running through the city. Prohibited contaminants listed in the code include, but are not limited to, trash, debris, petroleum products, paints, detergents, drain cleaners, pesticides, fertilizer, chlorinated swimming pool or spa wastewater, chlorine, bromine, other disinfectants, food wastes, lawn clippings, silt, sediment, concrete, and sewage. Storm drains do NOT empty into sewer pipelines that carry wastewater from our sinks and toilets to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Only clean stormwater may be discharged into stormwater systems, including drywells, and surface or ground waters. For swimming pools, the only exception is for discharges that have been de-chlorinated to a concentration of 0.1 parts per million (ppm) or less and are pH adjusted if necessary. However, most swimming pools and spas are normally maintained at chlorine concentrations of at least 1.0 ppm.

The following are best practices of what you can do to help prevent and reduce stormwater pollution:

- Discharge pool or spa wastewater onto your lawn or other pervious surface provided it does not run into the street.
- Discharge pool or spa wastewater into your sanitary sewer.
- If you are draining your pool for the winter and discontinue adding any chemicals such as chlorine for several days, you can discharge clean pool wastewater to the street provided the chlorine level is tested and has dropped below 0.1 ppm. The wastewater should not cause a traffic safety hazard or harm to adjacent property.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. Please be advised that violations of the above-referenced municipal code could result in fines, penalties, or other remedies as allowable by law.

Remember...only rain down the drain. Keep our rivers and creeks healthy!

Questions and/or Comments?

Contact the City of Walla Walla Stormwater Coordinator at 509.527.4537