



Draining your Pool, Hot Tub or Spa

Where should I discharge the water from my pool, hot tub or spa?

Rain water or melted snow collected on your pool cover can be discharged by a hose to the storm sewer drain once all debris, leaves or pet waste have been removed.

The water from both chlorine and salt water pools, including backwash water from the filter, can be discharged **onto your property surrounding your home or to the sanitary sewer, ONLY if the following conditions are met:**

- The water has a pH greater than 6.0 or less than 10.5.
- The water is free of debris, vegetation or algae.
- The water can be properly absorbed into the ground without flowing onto your neighbour's property. Before trying this option, you must consider the slope and surface of your property, as well as the proper rate to discharge the pool water so it will be fully absorbed on your own property. The water should also not cause pooling or ponding of water on your own property. **Failure to meet these conditions may cause flooding in basements in nearby homes.**

Tips for successful discharge:

- To reduce chemical concentrations, do not add chlorine or bromine 7-10 days before pumping down the pool, turn off pool heaters and leave the cover off to allow exposure to sunlight.
- Discharge water slowly using a hose with a maximum diameter equivalent to a garden hose. This will help reduce flow.
- Discharge the water at non-peak times such as evenings after 8 p.m. or weekends after 10 a.m. Ensure it is not raining to avoid overloading the sewer system.

If discharging to the sanitary sewer system or onto your property is not possible, both salt water and chlorine pool water must be hauled by a Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change approved hauler.

What to do in Case of a Spill

Pool chemicals are hazardous. In the case of a misdirected or unintentional discharge of pool water, please call the **Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's 24-hour reporting number:**

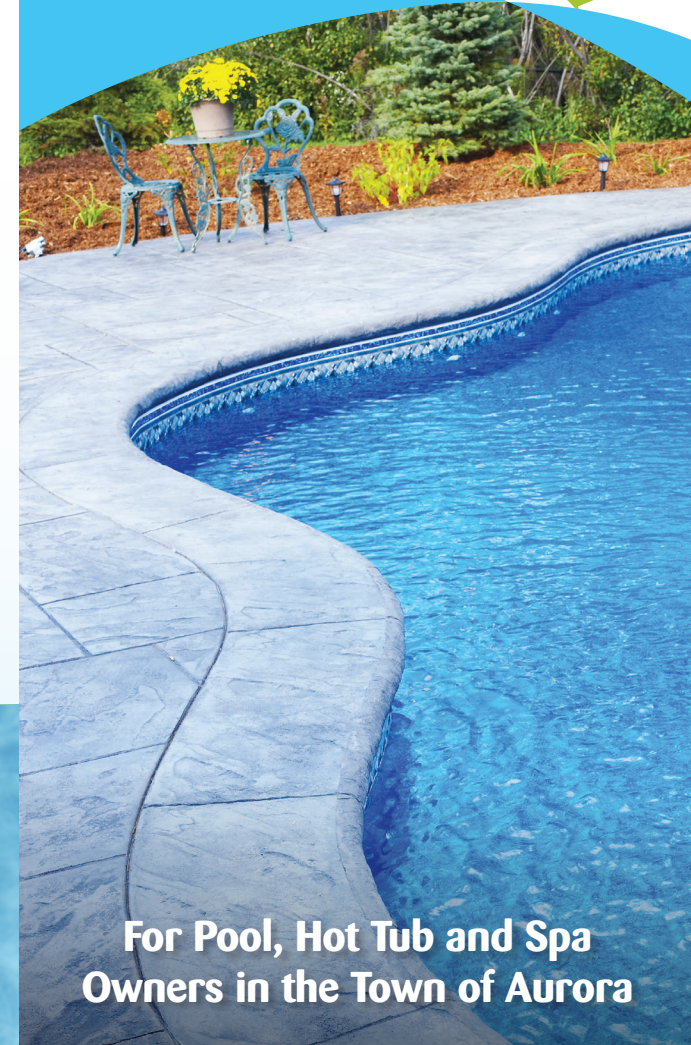
1-800-268-6060 (toll-free)
1-855-889-5775 (TTY)

Safe Disposal of Pool Chemicals

Leftover or expired pool chemicals are considered household hazardous waste and must be properly disposed of at one of York Region's Hazardous Waste Depots. For hours of operation, please visit www.york.ca/waste

- ▶ **East Gwillimbury Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Depot**
225 Garfield Wright Boulevard
East Gwillimbury, Ontario
- ▶ **Georgina Transfer Station and Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling Depot**
23068 Warden Avenue
Georgina, Ontario
- ▶ **Markham Household Hazardous Waste Depot**
Rodick Road (south of Miller Avenue)
Markham, Ontario
- ▶ **Vaughan Household Hazardous Waste Depot**
2840 Rutherford Road
Vaughan, Ontario

Safe Water Disposal Practices



For Pool, Hot Tub and Spa Owners in the Town of Aurora

Resources

Information on draining your pool or to report a spill or unintended discharge:

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
416-325-3000 (24-hour reporting)
1-800-268-6060
1-855-889-5775 (TTY)
www.ene.gov.on.ca

Pool best management practices:

Pool and Hot Tub Council of Canada
905-458-7242
www.poolcouncil.ca

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This brochure contains important information for the safe and environmentally-responsible management of pool and spa water.

Pool Water and the Environment

Pool Water, Local By-laws and Responsibilities



Throughout this document, “pool” or “pools” will be used in reference to swimming pools, hot tubs or spas operated on private, residential properties, both indoors and outdoors.

Inside:

- The Town of Aurora’s sewer system
- Pool water and the environment
- Pool water, local by-laws and responsibilities
- Draining your pool, hot tub or spa
- What to do in case of a spill
- Safe disposal of pool chemicals
- Resources

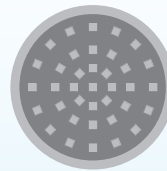


The Town of Aurora’s Sewer System

The Town of Aurora has two different sewer systems:

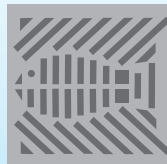
Sanitary Sewer

The **sanitary sewer** carries water and wastewater from drains and toilets in your home to Duffin Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility in Pickering and **is treated** before it is released into Lake Ontario.



Storm Sewer

Aurora’s **storm sewers** carry rain and melted snow away from houses and roads through large grates on the ground, known as catchbasins. Anything entering a catchbasin enters the storm sewer system and goes directly into the nearest stormwater management pond, creek, river and eventually travels to Lake Simcoe. This water is referred to as stormwater and **is not treated** before it goes into the environment.



Chlorine, bromine, copper-based algaecides, nonylphenols, nonylphenol ethoxylates, salt and other products used to keep pool and spa water clear and sparkling clean can be harmful to the environment if handled improperly. While these products are effective for pools and spas, the chemicals are toxic to fish and organisms that live in the creeks, ponds, streams and rivers that connect across York Region.

Did you know that if you are improperly draining your swimming pool into the storm sewer, you could be harming the aquatic life in our watercourses?

Pool water will cause erosion to the land banks, serious damage to vegetation and is toxic to aquatic life. Streams, creeks and any water courses located within 30 m of your pool are highly sensitive to pool discharge water.

What we do in Aurora can impact areas downstream through the headwaters of the Oak Ridges Moraine. These environmental systems filter drinking water for thousands of people and recharge water to sustain aquatic life downstream. Preventing chemicals in pool water from entering these rivers and streams is the environmentally-responsible course of action.

By keeping our lakes healthy, we strive to ensure a safe source of drinking water.

For more information on the many pool and spa water treatment and filtration options, please consult a pool or spa supplier in Aurora.



There are two by-laws to regulate the discharge of pool and spa water in Aurora:

Town of Aurora Sewer Use By-law 5518-13 and Regional Municipality of York Sewer Use By-law 2011-56

Under these by-laws, there are strict regulations in place related to draining or discharge of substances into our sanitary or storm sewers, as well as notification and reporting requirements. To obtain a copy of these by-laws, please visit www.aurora.ca/bylaws or www.york.ca

Pool Owner Responsibilities

As the owner of a private residential pool, you and any pool service providers you hire have a responsibility and legal obligation to safely maintain and operate your pool in compliance with the *Town of Aurora’s Sewer Use By-law 5518-13* and *The Regional Municipality of York’s Sewer Use By-law 2011-56*. Under these bylaws, pool water must be discharged into the sanitary sewer system to be treated:

- You and your hired pool service provider are responsible for ensuring that pool water is discharged into the **sanitary sewer system** to be properly treated.
- You and your hired pool service provider are legally obligated to **report a spill** if your pool water has leaked into a stream, river, lake or the storm sewer systems.

If pool water is discharged incorrectly and the by-law is breached, the maximum fine for a first offence can be up to \$50,000 and up to \$100,000 for subsequent offences.

The Town of Aurora’s Responsibility

The Town of Aurora is responsible for ensuring compliance of the Sewer Use By-law and to protect the environment. If necessary, the Town may order corrective measures under the authority of the *Town’s Sewer Use By-law Number 5518-13*.