

# DRAINING RESIDENTIAL SWIMMING POOLS AND HOT TUBS

Draining swimming pools and hot tubs can pollute our streams and lakes. The water may contain chemicals — chlorine, bromine, salt and more — that are harmful to our water, wildlife, and human health. All chemicals used in pools and hot tubs must be neutralized before being released into the environment. Discharging pool water that still contains chemicals to a storm drain without following water quality recommendations is considered an illicit discharge and is regulated under the Health Code.



## Follow these steps to minimize impact on our waterways:

- ✓ Ideally, pool water should be drained to the sanitary sewer.
- ✓ Let pool water stand untreated for at least seven (7) days to help allow chlorine, bromine, or other chemicals to dissipate. All swimming pool water **MUST** be dechlorinated to a concentration of chlorine less than 1 mg/L or 1 part per million (ppm) prior to discharge.
- ✓ Test the pH of the pool water to ensure it is close to neutral, near pH 7 (between 6.5 and 8.5) before draining. Adjust the pH if necessary.
- ✓ Remove excess sediment, leaves, and other debris from the water.
- ✓ Backwash filter to remove buildup of materials from the pool filter by reversing the water flow.
- ✓ If unable to drain pool water to the sanitary sewer, drain pool water over a well-vegetated area on the owner's property to slow it down and aerate it. If possible, pool water should not be drained directly into a storm drain or a stream. Avoid draining pool water across neighboring properties.
- ✓ Drain water at a slow rate so it does not cause flooding or erode stream banks downstream of the pool. Be sure not to drain pool water on top of any septic field.

