POOL MAINTENANCE FACTS

For Proper Discharging from Pools, Spas, Fountains, etc.

Introduction

The average swimming pool holds 19,000 gallons of chemically-treated water that likely contains chlorine or bromine, algaecides, and biocides. Such chemicals are toxic to the environment, wildlife, and fish. In fact, emptying water containing chemicals from pools, spas, and decorative fountains to nearby storm drains pollutes local streams and creeks. For this reason, such discharge is prohibited by the Town of Vinton's Illicit Discharge Ordinance.

NOTE: *Once chemicals have been allowed to dissipate, it is acceptable to let the discharge enter the storm drainage system.*

How This Affects You

Residents and service providers often drain water from pools, spas, and decorative fountains to conduct regular maintenance. Even pool or spa filter backwash water contains sediments and chemicals. Because these products are harmful to the natural environment, federal, state, and local regulations prohibit them from entering the drainage system.

It is your responsibility as a pool owner or a service provider to ensure that no chemically-laden discharge from a pool, spa, or decorative fountain is allowed to enter driveways, streets, or gutters, where it can travel to nearby storm drains.

What To Do

Here are some general maintenance guidelines:

- Let pool water sit for several days without treating it to allow chemicals to dissipate. Once the chemicals have dissipated, it is acceptable to discharge to the storm drainage system.
  - ⇒ Add sodium thiosulphate, a salt that breaks down chlorine, to the water for faster results. (Levels should be below 0.1 milligrams per liter of chlorine or bromine.)
  - ⇒ The pH of the water should be between 6.5 and 8.5 before it is drained.
  - ⇒ Avoid the use of algaecides, such as copper and silver, by proper maintenance of your pool's chemicals.
- Drain water that still contains chemicals to grassy areas, where it will soak into the ground rather than flow to nearby storm drains. (The lawn and soil serve as natural filters.) NOTE: Discharging saltwater into yards may cause some browning.

To learn more about the harmful effects of improper discharges on the area's receiving waters, see the Town's various public education videos, entitled *Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination - A Grate Concern*, at the following website:
www.vintonva.gov/index.aspx?nid=396

For questions or more information, contact:
Town of Vinton - Stormwater Program Manager
(540) 983-0607
mbrenchik@vintonva.gov

Town of Vinton Stormwater Management, 311 S. Pollard Street, Vinton, VA 24179 (540) 983-0607
To Report An Illicit Discharge, Please Visit Our Request Tracker Webpage:
http://www.vintonva.gov/requesttracker.aspx