

THE DIFFERENCE IN SEWER SYSTEMS

Sanitary Sewer

This system collects sewage and wastewater from toilets and sinks in your home. This water goes to a water treatment plant where it is treated.



Storm Sewer

This system collects rainwater, melted snow, and surface water through storm grates that drain directly into the nearest creek, river or lake. This water is NOT treated.



Remember: Storm water is not treated before it reaches your local water source. The chemicals you put down the storm drain go directly into rivers and creeks.



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NEED MORE INFO?

Please contact 905-546-5190

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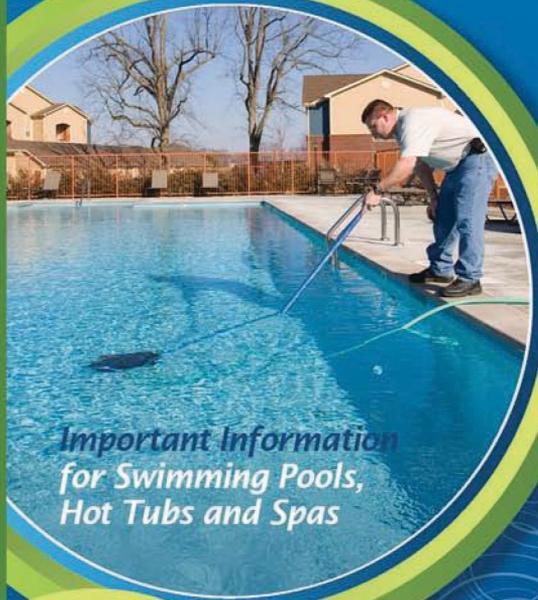
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EMPTYING YOUR POOL THE RIGHT WAY!

*Complying with
the City of Hamilton's
Sewer Use By-Law*



*Important Information
for Swimming Pools,
Hot Tubs and Spas*

The City of Hamilton has different types of sewer systems.

A **sanitary sewer** carries the water from the drains and toilet in your home to the City's wastewater treatment plant for treatment before it is released into Lake Ontario.

Hamilton also has **storm sewers** which 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 waterway and, eventually, Lake Ontario. This water, referred to as stormwater, is not treated.

In some older parts of the City, there is a combined sanitary and storm sewer system. During times of heavy rain, these sewers may overflow, wastewater may mix with stormwater, and may even be discharged into Lake Ontario without proper treatment.



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Did You Know?

- Don't add chemicals to your pool, spa or hot tub for two weeks before draining

- Draining your chlorinated water into the storm sewer kills fish

- Saltwater pools must always be discharged to the sanitary sewer

- Never drain your pool, spa or hot tub on a rainy day

- Discharge your pool, spa or hot tub across your lawn

Rain water or melted snow collected on your pool cover can be discharged to the storm sewer system as long as you remove leaves and other debris first. The backwash water from the filter must be filtered and dechlorinated if going to storm sewers, otherwise it must be discharged to the sanitary sewer or onto your surrounding property if it can be properly absorbed into the ground. By keeping Lake Ontario healthy, we are ensuring that we have a safe source from which to produce our drinking water.

Ravines and Valleys

Pool water (of any kind) can never be discharged into a ravine or valley, or onto the ground near to a ravine or valley. Pool water will cause erosion to the land banks and serious damage to vegetation.



YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

As the owner of a private swimming pool, hot tub or spa, you and any pool service provider have a responsibility and legal obligation to safely maintain and operate your pool, hot tub or spa in compliance with the local Sewer Use By-law. The City or Municipality sets out requirements for the proper operation, maintenance and seasonal closure of pools, hot tubs, and spas that will protect the area's water quality, and ultimately, your drinking water.

You and your hired pool service provider are legally obligated to report a spill to provincial and municipal authorities if your pool water has gone into a stream, river, lake or sewer systems without proper treatment.

THE CITY OF HAMILTON'S RESPONSIBILITY

The City of Hamilton has a responsibility to ensure compliance of the Sewer Use By-law and to protect the environment. This may include inspections, examinations and collection of wastewater samples for analysis. If necessary, the City may also order corrective measures under the authority of the City of Hamilton's Sewer Use By-law.



Why is water from chlorine and salt water pools a concern?

The water from pools is filled with chemicals. You need to keep your pool clean and safe for swimming. The main chemicals found in pools are chlorine/bromine, salt, copper-based algaecides, nonylphenols and nonylphenol ethoxylates. These chemicals are harmful to the fish and organisms that live in the creeks and rivers across Hamilton and Lake Ontario. The thousands of residential pools in the City of Hamilton can have a significant negative impact on creeks, rivers, and ultimately Lake Ontario.



HOW TO EMPTY POOL WATER THE RIGHT WAY

Chlorine Pools: The water from chlorine pools must be dechlorinated prior to discharging to the storm sewer system, but this should not be done during a rainy day as it will overwhelm the storm sewer system.

Salt Water Pools:

The water from salt water pools has such high levels of chlorides that it must be carefully discharged to the sanitary system located on your own property or hauled away by a Ministry of the Environment approved water hauler. Salt water is harmful to the storm sewer.

Emptying your Pool Water on the Ground:

Both chlorine and salt water pools can be emptied onto your property providing it absorbs into the ground. But, consider the slope and surface of your property and the rate which water is discharged from the pool to ensure it is absorbed in the ground and not running towards your home or your neighbours' property.

