

# Swimming Pools After a Fire

## Take Precautions. Be Safe. Protect Your Health.

The following guidelines are recommended for the maintenance of pools that were impacted by smoke and ash.



### Do not use pool until the following steps have been completed:

- Clean the skimmer baskets of debris and skim water surface of the pool with a pool net to remove floating debris.
- Brush the sides and the bottom of pool to loosen contaminants, then vacuum pool.
- Backwash and clean the filter(s). Release waste and wastewater into a **municipal sanitary sewer only**. If connected to a septic tank system, release the backwash to a pervious surface like gravel, lawn, or open space to allow for infiltration without erosion.

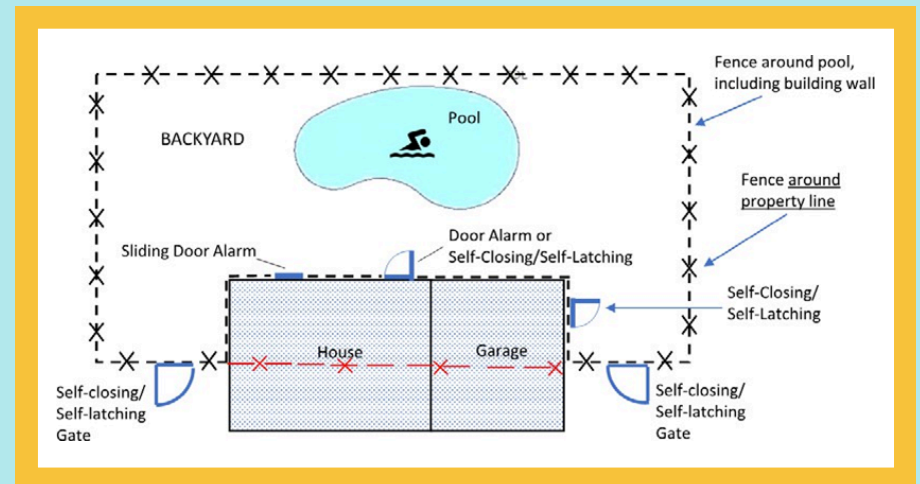
**Backwashing into the storm drain system (alleys, driveways, streets, storm drains) and creeks is prohibited by law.**

- Check pH and adjust level between **7.2** and **8.0**.
- Check free chlorine level and adjust level to a minimum of **2.0 ppm for a pool and 3.0 ppm for a spa**.
- Ensure the recirculation system is operating properly by checking filter pressure and/or the flow meter.
- Reopen pool only when pH levels are between **7.2 to 8.0** and the free chlorine is at a minimum of **2.0 ppm for a pool and 3.0 ppm for a spa**.

### Swimming Pool Fencing

**Pool and spa enclosures can be damaged by fires. Swimming pools and spas must be enclosed with a protective fence to prevent drowning, injuries, or other risks:**

- The enclosure must be **at least 60 inches** in height above grade.
- Gaps should not exceed **4 inches** to prevent access by small children.
- Gates and entrances should be self-closing and self-latching.



# Rebuilding Swimming Pools and Spas

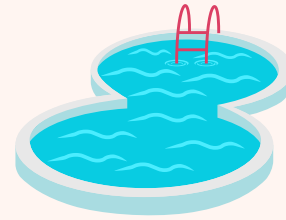
Fire can damage the structure of swimming pools and spas, including the shell, deck, equipment, and enclosure. After a wildfire, please follow the instructions below to repair or rebuild your pool.

## Residential Swimming Pools and Spas

The State debris removal program does not remove materials from pool repairs. Pool owners are responsible for permits, demolition material, and demolition.

Contact your **local Building and Safety Department** for requirements and instructions regarding pool structure and/or equipment repairs.

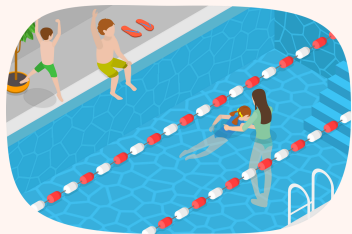
For unincorporated areas of LA County, please contact the LA County **Department of Public Works Building and Safety Division at (626) 458-5100**.



## Draining Pool

While draining a pool is not recommended, if damage to the pool requires it to be drained, residents in the unincorporated area may do so through an existing 3" p-trap installed with a permit from Building and Safety. Residents of cities should contact their local Building and Safety for requirements to drain a pool. Owners of salt water pools are advised to contact their city to determine where pool water may be legally discharged.

## Public Swimming Pools and Spas



All public swimming pools and spas located at hotels/motels, apartment buildings, condominiums, schools, health clubs, city parks, mobile home parks, resorts, organizations, water theme parks, and medical facilities are permitted by the Environmental Health Division.

Contact the **Recreational Waters Program** for requirements and construction plan submissions regarding any repair of pools and/or equipment.

**Deck Cleaning** - Clean the pool deck and throw away the debris with the solid waste. Do not hose down the deck or use a leaf blower because debris can go into the storm drains and the air. First, lightly spray the deck with water to minimize the amount of dust and ash that goes into the air. Second, use a stiff brush or broom to sweep and put the debris in a trash bag. A mop and bucket can also be used to clean the deck.

# Mosquito Breeding

An unkept pool or spa results in stagnant water, making it a breeding ground for mosquitoes to lay eggs that can produce

**thousands of mosquitoes**

in just a few weeks. Mosquitoes can spread serious diseases, such as West Nile Virus and Zika Virus.



It is important to prevent mosquito breeding conditions to stop diseases.

**Reminder:** Under the California Health and Safety Codes, homeowners are responsible for preventing and eliminating any mosquito breeding on their property.

**It is not necessary to empty the pool.**

Instead, use the following preventive measures to control mosquito breeding in vacant swimming pools or spas:

1. **Mosquito dunks**— a donut shaped solid item put in the swimming pool water to kill mosquito larvae and can be purchased at any hardware or garden shop.
2. **Mosquito fish**— are small fish that eat mosquito larvae. If mosquito fish are used, chemicals (such as chlorine) cannot be in or added to the water.

For mosquito fish, treatment and further assistance, please contact your **local Mosquito Abatement District**.

For more information, please contact the Environmental Health Division, **Recreational Waters Program** at **(626) 430-5360** or **rhealth@ph.lacounty.gov**.

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