

# Contaminated swimming pools after a bushfire

**After a bushfire, a swimming pool may contain debris including ash. This may affect the chemical balance of the water. Several actions may need to be undertaken before your pool is safe to use again.**



Swimming pools should either be emptied or kept chlorinated to prevent the water quality from deteriorating.

Contaminated swimming pools can be a:

- Source of odours and bacteria
- Breeding place for mosquitoes
- Risk to people who use them

## If the pool can be emptied

To determine whether your pool can be emptied following damage by a bushfire, advice from a building consultant may be required.

Emptying a pool situated in an area with a high water table or in water-logged soils may put the pool walls under stress.

Potentially contaminated pool water needs to be disposed of to a location where it will not

cause overflow or contaminate other water bodies.

## If it is safe to empty the pool:

- All water and residue should be removed
- Flush plumbing pipes and replace filters
- Clean and sanitise the pool floor and walls

Once completely cleaned, the pool can be refilled using scheme water. Disinfectant can be added to bring the pool up to the operating parameters.

## Where a pool cannot be emptied

For pools unable to be emptied, a trained technical operator will need to inspect the pool and determine an appropriate treatment to remove solids from the water.

Depending on the amount and type of inundation, the water may need to be treated over several days. Qualified operators should determine the time required for waste removal, chemical treatment process and chlorination to achieve the required filtration of pool water.

## Further information

Refer to the HealthyWA website:

[healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/After-a-bushfire-hazards-on-your-property](https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/After-a-bushfire-hazards-on-your-property)

Other factsheets include:

- Asbestos hazards after a bushfire
- Ashes from CCA treated timber after a bushfire
- Health hazards after a bushfire

- Damaged chemicals, poisons or pesticides after a bushfire
- On-site wastewater damaged after a bushfire
- Rainwater tanks after a bushfire

To discuss further:

- Contact your local government Environmental Health Officer
- Call the Environmental Health Directorate, Department of Health WA on (08) 9222 2000 or email [ehinfo@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ehinfo@health.wa.gov.au)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.**

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