

Swimming pools and bushfires

This fact sheet provides information about what to do if your residential pool has been affected by a bushfire.

After a bushfire, your swimming pool may contain debris including ash. This may affect the chemical balance of the water.

Cover your pool to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in the water until you are ready to restore your swimming pool after a bushfire.

Restoring water quality

- Ensure damaged fencing is repaired to keep people and animals out of the pool area.
- Ensure damaged electrical equipment is checked by an electrician.
- Remove debris and ash from the pool and clean out the skimmer and pump baskets.
- Turn the pump on to remove remaining ash and leaves.
- Clean out your filter. Follow your supplier's instructions. This may include, for cartridge filters, remove the cartridge and hose it down. For sand or media filters, backwash the filter.
- Test the chlorine and pH of the water as you are likely to need to adjust chlorine and pH levels. You may need to apply a shock dose of chlorine or super chlorination because of the change to the water's chemistry.
- You could take a water sample to your local pool shop to get advice on the treatment needed to improve and restore the water quality.

If your pool requires emptying

If the water quality is poor and cannot be restored, you may need to empty, clean and refill your pool.

Before emptying your pool:

- Check the current water restrictions as you may need a permit to refill the pool.
- Seek advice on how to safely empty your pool without damaging its structure.
- Contact your local council or water utility for advice on disposing of the chlorinated pool water. The council or water utility may have its own policy on disposal of pool water depending on the available infrastructure. Generally pool water should not be emptied into the stormwater system or local creeks and waterways.

Once emptied, you'll need to clean the entire pool, including surrounding structures and associated plumbing and treatment equipment. After refilling and treating the new pool water, check the water quality before allowing anyone to use the pool.

For further information

1. NSW Fair Trading: <https://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/housing-and-property/building-and-renovating/pools-and-pool-safety/swimming-pools-and-spas>
2. Contact [your local Council](#)
3. Contact your [local Public Health Unit](#) by calling 1300 066 055
4. Information on swimming pools and emergency preparedness: https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/emergency_preparedness/weather/Pages/swimming-pools.aspx