

March 2024

Protect Arlington Streams – When You Drain Your Pool, Follow the Rules!

Dear Pool Owner,

With summer just around the corner, you may be preparing your swimming pool for the season.

Before you drain or maintain your pool, remember these three rules:

1. **Chlorine or bromine levels should be ZERO**, pH should be neutral, and the temperature should be cool. Give chlorine or bromine enough time to dissipate completely from the water before you drain the pool. Remove any leaves or other debris.
2. **Drain smart and slowly.** Drain your pool to a sanitary sewer drain if possible. If not, discharge water slowly over a grassy or vegetated area over the course of several days.
3. **Pool wash water must be discharged to the sanitary sewer.** Harsh cleaning chemicals should never be discharged to the storm drain.



Did you know? A large fish kill in Four Mile Run was caused by an Arlington pool draining chlorinated water to an outdoor storm drain (see back for headlines).

Outdoor storm drains send water directly to the nearest stream, not to the treatment plant. When you clean, maintain, or drain your pool this year, remember that your actions can make a huge impact.

Please share this information with your pool cleaning or maintenance company. To learn more, visit <https://arlingtonva.us/drain-pool>.

As you enjoy your pool this season, do your part to protect Four Mile Run and other Arlington streams! Thank you.

VIRGINIA

Flawed seasonal pool care kills 100 fish in Four Mile Run

"Swimming pool and spa water can have devastating effects on the health of our streams if not disposed of properly," county officials say.

The killer of dozens of fish in Four Mile Run? Pool water, investigators say.

[ARLnow.com](#) September 13, 2022 at 11:45am

We now know the likely culprit that [killed nearly 100 fish](#) in Four Mile Run last week: pool water.

"Investigators say flawed seasonal pool care involving chlorine and overflow led to last week's fish kill in Four Mile Run," Arlington Dept. of Environmental Services spokesman Peter Golkin tells ARLnow. "Recent rains have now cleared the stream. Reminder: No filters on our storm drains. Please be careful."

Golkin said overflow from the pool at a "multi-family property swimming pool" — in other words, an apartment or condo complex — "got into the storm drain" and made its way to the stream, between S. Walter Reed Drive and S. Taylor Street.

Pool water, it turns out, is deadly.

"Swimming pool and spa water can have devastating effects on the health of our streams if not disposed of properly," [the county's website](#) says. "The chlorine, bromine, algaecides, cleaning chemicals and low oxygen levels can kill fish and other aquatic life in streams."