

# ATTACHMENT D



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Salt Water Pool Discharges

### **How do salt water pools differ from regular pools?**

Chlorine is the most common chemical additive to control bacterial growth in swimming pools. Salt water pools use a chlorine generator to produce chlorine by breaking down salt. These pools generate chlorine and produce bromoform as a byproduct. Bromoform is a persistent organic pollutant that accumulates in the environment and is very harmful to aquatic life.

### **How should salt water pool discharges be handled?**

Ideally, *all* pool discharges should be routed to the sanitary sewer in accordance with the system operator's requirements. However, dechlorinated pool discharges may be routed to a vegetated area where the water can soak into the ground, but cannot reach or impact:

- Storm drains,
- Stormwater conveyances such as curbs, gutters, pipes and ditches,
- Septic system drain fields,
- Natural waterways and surface water bodies, or
- Adjoining property.

Keep in mind that pool chemicals can significantly impact vegetation and soils, and high velocity discharges may result in erosion.

### **Can I discharge pool water into my septic system?**

Routing pool discharges to a septic system could result in failure of the system. While septic systems are on-site wastewater treatment devices, they are not typically sized to handle the extra volume of water associated with a pool discharge. Overloading the septic drain field, either by discharging pool water on top of the drain field or directly into the septic system, can cause system failure. Pool chemicals can also harm the bacteria in the septic system that break down waste.

### **Can I discharge pool water into the storm drain system?**

Pool filter backwash and saltwater pool discharges to the storm sewer system are prohibited in all cases. Unlike sanitary sewer systems that carry wastewater to a treatment plant, storm sewer systems collect and carry water directly to local surface water bodies such as creeks, streams, lakes and drinking water reservoirs. Saltwater swimming pool water contains a variety of chemicals and products that are harmful to the environment; and it is illegal to discharge these into surface waters via the storm sewer system.