

Draining and Backwashing Your Pool

From City of Phoenix website:

<https://www.phoenix.gov/waterservices/customerservices/generalinfo/poolinfo>

Here's How to Drain and Backwash Pools Properly:

When you need to backwash your pool filter or drain the pool, reuse the water to irrigate landscaping. Do not drain water into the street, alleyway or other city of Phoenix right of way.

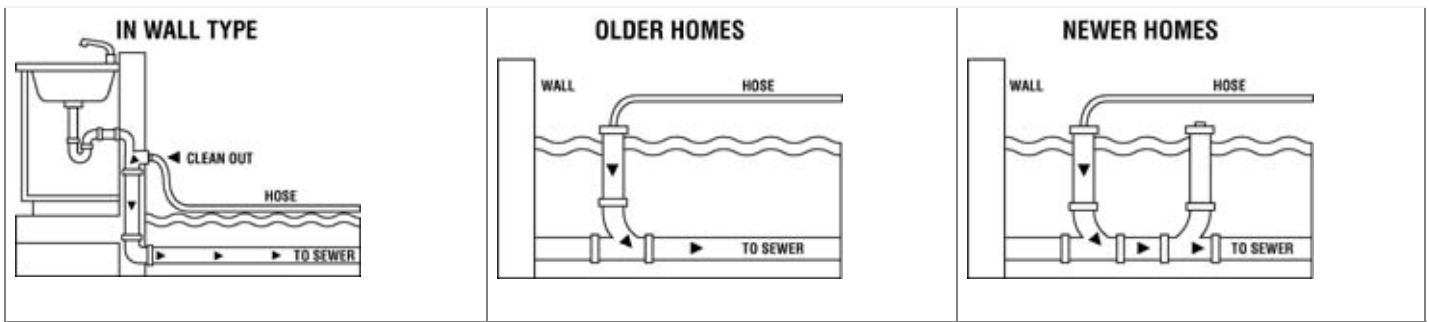
Take care when using pool water on landscaping since it contains more salt and chlorine than tap water. Bermuda grass and Oleanders can be watered without much problem, but avoid using this water on citrus, hibiscus, or other salt-sensitive plants. Also, avoid spraying the water directly onto leaves or watering the same area repeatedly.

If you have to drain a large amount of water - such as emptying the whole pool - put it down the home's sewer clean-out. The clean-out is usually located next to the house at the point closest to the city sewer line and usually outside a bathroom or the kitchen. On some older homes, the clean-out is located in the wall. On other homes, it is at ground level, but may be hidden by landscaping. Older homes usually have only one opening, while newer ones have two clean-out pipes leading to the sewer line. A threaded cap, usually black and 3 to 4 inches in diameter, covers the opening. If your neighborhood has alleys, your clean-out is probably in your back yard. If there is no alley, it may be in the front or side yard. If you cannot locate it, or a sidewalk or a patio has covered it, consult a plumber about installing one.

Caution: Using a clean-out in the wall is risky and the potential for water backing up into the home is great.

The maximum recommended discharge rate is 12 gallons per minute (720 gal/hr). However, the safe flow rate may be less, depending on the size of the drain line, distance to the sewer main, and the condition of the pipe. Most pool filter pumps will discharge too much water too fast and may cause water to backup into the yard or the house. The safest approach is to rent a submersible pump, connect it to a garden hose and slowly empty the pool. **Refer to the "Hours Required to Drain a Pool" chart to learn more.** A pump that operates at 700 gallons per hour is about the right size.

Use the graphics below to understand the clean out at your home, then follow the outlined procedure



Procedure for using the sewer clean-out

- Locate the clean-out. If there are two, use the one closest to the home.
- Remove the cap and insert the drain hose a few inches into the pipe.
- Secure the drain hose so it won't pop out.
- Turn on the pump.
- Immediately check to ensure no water is backing up into the house. Drains in showers and tubs are the first places to check.
- If the water backs up, turn off the pump immediately. You may have a blockage, or the flow rate is too high.

Note: Do not install the pool drain line as a permanent fixture. This may violate the city plumbing code or county health regulations and could contaminate the water when you refill the pool.

If a sanitary sewer clean-out is not available (e.g., the house has septic tank), clean pool water (i.e., de-chlorinated/dibrominated, and containing no pollutants, such as sediment, diatomaceous earth, algae, etc.), may be discharged to the right-of-way, provided the flow rate is less than 50 gpm, and the chlorine level is less than 1 ppm. Discharging backwash and saltwater pools is prohibited. Discharging to an alley is also prohibited.

Note that the timing when you refill your pool is important. If it is performed in the months when water rates are higher, it will cost you much more than if you refill the pool during the January, February and March. billing cycles. However, regardless of the time of year, a major increase in water usage of any kind can impact your sewer fee, when it is recalculated in July. To avoid the impact of a spike in water use on your monthly bill, you can file for a sewer fee adjustment by visiting [MyPHX311](#), select "Submit Documents - City Services Bill" and select "Sewer Fee Review" from the pull down menu and fill out the online form. Please note, any attachments must be in non-editable format such as PDF. Photographs or screen-captures of documents are not acceptable. If you cannot use the online system, [download the form here](#) and submit it by mail.

HOURS REQUIRED TO DRAIN A POOL

Flow Rate		Pool Volume (Gallons)					
Gal/Min	Gal/Hour	10,000	11,000	12,000	13,000	14,000	15,000
6	360	28 Hours	31	33	36	39	42
7	420	24	26	29	31	33	36
8	480	21	23	25	27	29	31
9	540	19	20	22	24	26	28
10	600	17	18	20	22	23	25
11	660	15	17	18	20	21	23
12	720	14	15	17	18	19	21